HUNTER
TRAVEL GUIDES

RIO
& the Best of
BRAZIL

ALIVE!

SHOPPING HOTELS RESTAURANTS
NIGHTTIME ENTERTAINMENT DAYTIME FUN

Arnold Greenberg & Harriet Greenberg

VISIT…

VENEZUELA
SURINAM
COLOMBIA
Boa Vista
GUAYANA
210 KM
210 MILES
N
Macapá
BELÉM
SÃO LUÍS
MANAUS
Santarém
FORTALEZA
AMAZONAS
NORTH
Teresina
NATAL
NORTHEAST
RECIFE
Porto Velho
MACEIÓ
Rio Branco
CENTRAL-WEST
Palmas
Aracaju
PERÚ
SALVADOR
ILHÉUS
Cuiabá
BRASILIA
Goiânia
PORTO SEGURO
BOLIVIA
SOUTHWEST
Campo Grande
VITÓRIA
RÍO DE JANEIRO
CHILE
PARAGUAY
SÃO PAULO
Foz do Iguaçu
CURITIBA
ARGENTINA
FLORIANÓPOLIS
SOUTHEAST
PORTO ALEGRA
URUGUAY
Pacific Ocean
Atlantic Ocean
Regions of Brazil
© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

RIO
& the Best of
BRAZIL
ALIVE!

RIO
& the Best of BRAZIL
ALIVE!

Arnold Greenberg & Harriet Greenberg

HUNTER

HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC.
130 Campus Drive, Edison, NJ 08818
☎ 732-225-1900; ☎ 800-255-0343; Fax 732-417-1744
www.hunterpublishing.com

Ulysses Publications
4176 Saint-Denis
Montréal, Québec, Canada
☎ 514-843-9447

The Roundhouse Group
Millstone, Limers Lane, Northam
Devon, EX39 2RG England
☎ 01237-474474; Fax 01237-474774

ISBN 978-1-58843-631-3

© 2007 Hunter Publishing, Inc.

This and other Hunter travel guides are also available as e-books in a variety of digital formats through our online partners, including ContentReserve.com, eBooks.com and Netlibrary.com.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the written permission of the publisher.

This guide focuses on recreational activities. As all such activities contain elements of risk, the publisher, author, affiliated individuals and companies disclaim responsibility for any injury, harm, or illness that may occur to anyone through, or by use of, the information in this book. Every effort was made to insure the accuracy of information in this book, but the publisher and author do not assume, and hereby disclaim, liability for any loss or damage caused by errors, omissions, misleading information or potential travel problems caused by this guide, even if such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident or any other cause.

Cover: Carnaval dancer © Berren Patterson/Alamy
Maps © 2007 Hunter Publishing, Inc.
Index by Nancy Wolff
1 2 3 4

www.hunterpublishing.com

Hunter's full range of guides to all corners of the globe is featured on our website. You'll find guidebooks to suit every type of traveler, no matter what their budget, lifestyle, or idea of fun.

Adventure Guides – There are now over 40 titles in this series, covering destinations from Costa Rica and the Yucatán to Tampa Bay & Florida's West Coast, Puerto Rico and the Alaska Highway. Complete with information on what to do, as well as where to stay and eat, *Adventure Guides* are tailor-made for the curious traveler, with a focus on physical and cultural adventures such as hiking, dancing, canoeing, cooking, horseback riding, trekking, skiing, watersports, and every other kind of fun.

Alive Guides – This ever-popular line of books takes a unique look at the best each destination offers: fine dining, jazz clubs, first-class class hotels and resorts. Icons in the margin direct the reader at a glance. Top-sellers include *The Cayman Islands, St. Martin & St. Barts,* and *Aruba, Bonaire & Curaçao.*

One-of-a-kind travel books available from Hunter include *Best Dives of the Caribbean; A Traveler's Guide to the Galapagos Islands; London A-Z* and many more.

Full descriptions are given for each book on our website, along with reviewers' comments and a cover image. Books may be purchased on-line via our secure transaction facility.

Contents

INTRODUCTION 1
- The People 6
  - Faiths 7
  - Language 11
- Tastes of Brazil 12
  - Food 12
  - Drinks 16
- A Capsule History 17
  - The 1800s 18
  - The Republic of Brazil 21
  - Modern Brazil 22
- Geography 23
  - The South 23
  - The Southeast 24
  - The Central-West 24
  - The Northeast 25
  - The North 25
- National Holidays 28
- Brazilian Gemstones 29

TRAVEL INFORMATION 33
- Getting There 33
  - Customs 34
- Getting Ready 35
  - Entry Requirements 35
  - Entry/Exit Card 37
- Health Concerns 38
  - Travelers With Disabilities 39
- Weather 41
  - Packing 41
- Traveler's Potpourri 42
    - Airlines 42
    - Consulates 43
    - Departure Taxes 43
    - Electricity 43
    - Money Matters 44
    - Telephones 45
    - Time Zones 47

RIO DE JANEIRO 49
- Arrival 49
  - Getting To Your Hotel 49
  - Getting Around Town 50
- Rio Traveler's Potpourri 55
  - Airlines 55
  - Bookstores 55
  - Banks 55
  - Traveler's Checks 56
  - ATMs 56
  - Key Streets 56
  - Music Shop 57
  - Newspapers 57
  - Pharmacies 57
  - Photographic Resources 57
  - Postal Services 58
  - Internet Access 58
  - Tourist Information 59
- Orientation 62
- Some Background 64
- Neighborhoods 65
  - Zona Norte 65
  - Centro 66
  - Zona Sul 67
  - Zona West 76
- Sunup to Sundown 78
  - Beaches (Praias) 80
  - More Sea & Sand 89
    - Paquetá Island 89
    - Cruising in Guanabara Bay 90
  - Mountain Landmarks 91
    - Corcovado Mountain 91
    - Sugar Loaf Mountain (Pão de Acúcar) . 94
  - A Walking Tour of Centro 96
    - Sidetrip to Fiscal Island 108
  - Sightseeing 108
    - Santa Teresa 108
  - Museums 112
  - Street Fairs 123
  - Parks & Gardens 127
  - Theme Parks 136

Active Sports 137
Spectator Sports 145
Tours 147
City Tours. 147
Adventure & Ecological Tours 148
◆ Special Events 149
Carnaval 149
Bands & Street Carnaval. 152
Carnaval Balls 153
Samba School Parades 155
◆ Best Places to Dine 157
Dining Advice & Etiquette 159
The Alive Restaurant Scale 161
Portuguese 161
French 163
Italian 166
Seafood 170
Churrascarias 171
Ethnic & Eclectic 175
Japanese & Sushi 180
Traditional Bahian Restaurants. 183
Lighter Fare 185
Botequims & Botecos 189
Vegetarian & Salad Bars 192
Juice Bars. 194
Ice Cream (Sorvete) 195
◆ Best Places to Stay 195
Hotel Price Scale 198
Hotels 199
Long-term Stays 231
◆ Rio After Dark 232
The Music 232
Samba Shows 233
Beyond the Clubs 233
Nightlife 101 234
Event Listings 236
Night Life Centers 237
Night Clubs & Music 239
Bars & Pubs 244
Gay & Lesbian Hangouts. 248
Clubs That Cater to Men 250

Concert Halls 251
Classical & Cultural Venues 252
Cinema 255
Samba School Rehearsals 256
Attending a Macumba Service 257
◆ Shops & Shopping 258
Shopping Tips 261
Customs Regulations 263
Shopping Venues 264
Shopping Centers 266
Rio's Best Shops 272
Jewelry 272
Swim Wear 274
Handicafts & Folklore Shops 276
Resort Wear 278
Lingerie 280
Shoes & Leather Goods 280
Sports Gear & Clothing 282
Gift Shops 282
Art Galleries 283
Coffees & Cachaças 284
Books & Music 285
◆ Day Trips 286
Petrópolis 286
Places to Stay & Eat 288
Getting Here 289
Búzios 289
Sunup to Sundown 290
Pousadas & Hotels 293
Dining Spots 294
After Dark 296
Getting Here 296

THE BEST OF BRAZIL 297
◆ Destinations to Consider 297
◆ Getting Around 301
◆ Manaus 303
A Brief History 306
Getting Here 308
Packing For The Amazon 309
Exploring Manaus 309

Exploring the Amazon 316
Hotels 320
In Manaus 320
Jungle Lodges – Barges 322
Longer Tour Options 330
Restaurants 331
Shopping 332
◆ Iguaçu Falls 333
Getting Here 336
Tourist Information 338
Exploring the Brazilian Side 338
Exploring the Argentinean Side 340
Hotels 342
Restaurants 344
◆ Brasília 345
Getting Here 348
Getting Around 349
Tourist Information 349
Climate 349
Exploring Brasília 351
Hotels 362
Restaurants 364
Shopping 366
◆ Salvador 367
Getting Here 371
Exploring Upper City 372
Exploring Lower City 384
Forts 389
Beach Areas 391
A Day-trip to Itaparica Island 392
Salvador's Three "C"s 394
Candomblé 394
Capoeira 395
Carnaval 396
Hotels 399
Restaurants 403
◆ Recife & Olinda 408
An Orientation 410
Getting Here 412
Climate 413
Exploring Recife 413

Exploring Olinda 420
Beaches 429
Beach Towns 430
Scuba Diving 432
Hotels 433
Restaurants 436
Shopping 438
◆ The Pantanal 438
Climate & Time Zone 442
Cuiabá & The Northern Pantanal 443
Getting Here 443
Exploring Cuiabá 443
Hotels 444
Restaurants 445
Day-Trip 446
Chapada dos Guimarnes 446
Reliable Local Tour Operators 448
Campo Grande, The Southern Pantanal . . . 449
Getting Here 450
Exploring the South 450
Day-Trip 452
Bonito 452
Reliable Local Tour Operators 454
◆ São Paulo 454
Some Background 456
Getting Here 459
Getting Around 459
Weather & Clothing 462
Exploring Centro 463
Ethnic São Paulo 469
The Financial District 471
Jardims 472
Hotels 474
Restaurants 477

INDEX 481

Maps

Regions of Brazil . . . . . inside front cover
Brazil 26
Rio de Janeiro & Environs 60

Leme & Copacabana 71
Ipanema & Leblon 73
Rio's Historic Center 97
Manaus 310
Iguaçu Falls & Park 337
Brasília 350
Salvador 373
Recife. 415
Olinda 422
São Paulo. 460
Downtown São Paulo 465

Introduction

Cariocas (residents of Rio) love to say that God created the world in six days and on the seventh day he outdid himself and created Rio. Once you've been here, you might agree. Rio is a unique city and your vacation here will be different than any other vacation you've ever taken. It takes just a short time for your inner clock to slow down, for you to unwind and forget the scores of things you left undone, for your feet and spirit to begin to move to a different beat.

There are other wonderful cities in the world – New York, Paris, Hong Kong to name a few. Each has a special quality that sets it apart. Rio is a combination of what nature and man have wrought.

Courtesy Rio Tur

Corcovado & Sugar Loaf Mountain.

Nature has certainly been kind to the city. Guanabara Bay, on which the city was founded, is a definite 10 on any rating scale. Tiny islands dot the blue water and its graceful curve is marked by inlets and coves. Stretching westward are over 30 miles of beachfront – thick, white sandy beaches as fine as those on any Caribbean island. The weather is first rate all year.

It is the Cariocas, however, that have taken these fine raw materials and transformed them into the city you see today. Their love of the sun, sand and the good life forced Rio to expand from the narrow confines of the bay along the Atlantic coast, where they established what we call the "beach communities." Over the years, these have become the most important residential and commercial areas of the city. They are also the most interesting areas for visitors to explore. It is the Cariocas themselves who flock to the beaches and restaurants, shout themselves hoarse at soccer matches and dance till dawn at fabulous night spots. It is the Cariocas, too, that have created the most celebrated Carnaval in the world. The hotels – which are for the most part unobtrusive (no Miami Beach strip here) and dotted throughout the city – are the Cariocas' way of welcoming you to join them in their love of their city and of life.

Any city, no matter how overwhelming, is a reflection of the nation of which it is a part. Brazil is a fascinating mix of three distinctive cultures, European, African and Indian. Founded and colonized by the Portuguese in the early 1500s, the earliest settlers mixed

with the indigenous Indians, who are believed to have numbered one million souls. Gradually, much of the Indian culture was lost (except in the midst of the vast Amazon Basin) as it was absorbed into that of the Portuguese. In the late 16th and early 17th centuries, an event took place that was crucial to the development of Brazil. Large numbers of slaves were brought to Brazil to work on the sugar plantations. They brought with them the culture, religious practices and mores of Northwest Africa. Rather than being absorbed by the Portuguese, their culture blended with it and so the culture of Brazil is a hybrid one. The slaves also gave the country its distinctive hue and beat. Although nominally a Roman Catholic country, millions of Brazilians are guided, in ways small and large, by the African religions "Macumba" (Rio) and "Candomblé" (Bahia). These religions are complete with saints (aligned with Christian ones), ceremonies and houses of worship called *terreiros*. Some of the mediums through which the rites are expressed have become known worldwide.

See Faiths, *page 9, for details about macumba ceremonies.*

The African influence is also apparent in the foods of Brazil. Traditional dishes use shellfish, coconuts, sweet potatoes and manioc flour. The Portuguese introduced meats and chicken, while *gauchos* in southern Brazil contributed the grilled meats that tie Brazil to its southern neighbors, Uruguay and Argentina.

Modern immigration, starting in the mid-19th century, has brought Italians, Germans and Japanese in large numbers, and many

Jews fled to Brazil from Europe as Hitler came to power.

Brazilian architecture has left its mark on both Brazil and the world. Oscar Niemeyer, one of Brazil's most famous architects, is best known for his design of United Nations headquarters in New York. Here in Brazil, he is known as the moving force and architect of Brasília, the futuristic capital in the interior of the country. The Contemporary Art Museum in Niterói is a stunning example of his work.

Niterói's Museum of Contemporary Art

Until Brasília was built in 1960, Río was the capital of the country. Far from the city being diminished by losing this special status, it has continued its growth and expansion. It remains the mecca for Brazilians and foreign visitors alike.

Brazilian government is based on the American model and since 1985 it has been ruled

by a civilian president. For the previous 20 years it had been ruled by military leaders. Brazil owes its freedom to Napoleon, of all people, for it was Napoleon who in 1808 forced the Portuguese King Dom João VI and 15,000 nobles to flee from Portugal to this colony. He Europeanized the colony and brought it new wealth. After Napoleon's defeat, Dom João VI returned to Portugal, leaving his son, Dom Pedro in charge. A year later Dom Pedro proclaimed Brazil's independence and became its emperor. This did not sit well with his father or the Portuguese parliament, and he was eventually forced to resign in favor of his son, who became Emperor Dom Pedro II. A popular leader, he encouraged education and opened Brazil's doors to new immigrants. These newcomers brought important skills that Brazil lacked. Emperor Dom Pedro II's rule came to an abrupt halt when, in 1889, his daughter declared emancipation for the slaves. She neglected to provide compensation for the slave owners, who led a revolt against the Emperor. The country became a republic on November 15, 1889.

Emperor Dom Pedro II.

You can spend your entire vacation in Rio and have a terrific time – most people do. But if time permits and if you enjoy variety in your travel experiences you should plan to visit other parts of this vast country. In the *Best of Brazil* section, we have selected other places of interest in all parts of the country. See *The Brazil Airpass* callout, page 301, for details about getting around Brazil.

Whatever your time frame, Brazil is a special place and Brazilians are a warm and generous people. Enjoy your stay in Rio and wherever else time permits you to visit.

Boa Viagem!

The People

Brazil's indigenous people were **Indians**, who numbered about one million when the Portuguese arrived. When sugar plantations were established, Indians were forced into slave labor. Some fled to the interior of the country and into the Amazon region, where a few isolated tribes still exist. Although the Portuguese settled in the region in the largest numbers, there were small pockets of French Huguenots and Dutch settlements in the northeast. Many **Africans** were brought to Brazil as slaves. They worked on the sugar plantations and then on coffee plantations. By the 19th century, blacks far outnumbered Europeans. Intermarriage created a population that is a blend of all three cultures. Many Brazilians are brown-skinned.

Modern immigration began in the mid-19th century with **Italians**, **Spanish** and **Germans** arriving in large numbers. **Japanese**, too, arrived in such quantities that São Paulo is currently home to the biggest Japanese community outside of Japan.

Before World War II, large numbers of **European Jews** arrived in Brazil just ahead of Nazi armies. Today, while Europeans dominate the economic structure, it is the African culture that has had the most influence on Brazil's music, foods and religions.

FIGAS

A clenched fist good luck charm with the thumb extended between the second and third fingers, the figa, came to Brazil with African slaves in the 17th century. It is carved from wood or precious stones and can be worn on a chain or as earrings, or it can be large enough to sit on a desk. To bring good luck, a figa must be a gift.

FAITHS

Catholicism

Officially, Brazil is a **Catholic** country with the largest Catholic community in the world. It was one of the first countries visited by Pope John Paul II, who spoke to thousands at Maracaná Stadium. All the fabulous churches, monasteries and convents in Rio's historic quarter and throughout the city are Catholic, with the earliest ones built by the Franciscan, Benedictine and Carmelite or-

ders. In recent years, Evangelical churches have become increasingly popular. Usually small and simply furnished, they appeal to many in poorer sections of the city who want a more personal relationship with Jesus. There are churches for Protestant denominations such as Baptists, Anglicans, Method-

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

The façade of the Church of Third Order in Salvador was created in Spanish Baroque style.

ists and Lutherans. And there is a vibrant Jewish community in the city with synagogues in Botafogo and Copacabana. There are several mosques, Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches and a Buddhist temple.

Macumba

While Catholics continue to practice their traditional faith, millions of them also take part in ceremonies and rites of another faith. Macumba is the general term that Cariocas use to describe two types of African spirit worship: Candomblé (practiced in the state of Bahia) and Umbanda (a newer form that originated in Rio). Macumba, like most things in the new world, came from another continent and culture. It originated with African slaves in the 1550s, who continued to worship their gods, called *orixás*, when they arrived in Brazil.

Macumba's survival in Brazil is a history of adaptation. Suppressed by both slave owners and the Catholic Church, the faith went underground and secret ceremonies were held on beaches and in the forests. While the country had many religions in the 16th century, slave owners prohibited slaves from practicing their African form of worship, so the slaves incorporated their beliefs into the spirits and rites of the Catholic Church. The faiths merged. The god Exú became St. Anthony, Iemanjá became Our Lady of Glory, Oxalá became Jesus Christ and Oxumare became St. Bartholomew. So while slaves outwardly followed the Catholic faith, they secretly practiced their African beliefs until

they were freed in 1888. They summoned their gods with their drums, which they were permitted to use.

Although Umbanda, Candomblé and Macumba share the same set of beliefs, their rites and ceremonies differ from one terreiro (house of worship) to another. There are many *orixás* (gods), each with its own rituals, colors and habits. Each person has an *orixá* that attends to his needs from his birth to his death. To discover one's personal *orixá*, a ceremony is held in which a medium (called a *cavalo*, a *pãe* or *mãe do santo*, the saint's parents) throws a handful of shells and "reads" their message. There are male and female *orixás*, and some that switch gender. Food is offered to *orixás* to keep them happy and they are summoned by singing, chanting, drumming and perfume. The believer, now possessed by the *orixá*, goes into a trance, starts talking in tongues, and adopts the voice, movements and personality of the *orixá*. Ceremonies are held in the Yoruba language.

CULTURALLY CURIOUS

The god Exú acts as a messenger between other gods and the human world. Having both human and animal characteristics, he is often shown with a horn and an erect penis. Not understood by the traditionalists, he was labeled the devil.

Some *terreiros* allow non-believers to attend ceremonies. Check the *Rio After Dark* section, page 257, for details.

MACUMBA & NEW YEAR'S EVE

December 31st is a special time to be in Rio, especially on Copacabana Beach. At midnight, fireworks fill the sky, rising from platforms in the ocean between Leme and Copacabana Fort. Huge crowds gather for the spectacle.

But what makes New Year's Eve special in Rio starts earlier in the day when adherents of the Afro-Brazilian faiths – candomblé, umbanda and macumba – stakeout places on the beach and begin making sand altars. By late afternoon you'll hear the sound of drums and you'll see men and women, all dressed in white, gathering to be blessed by mediums.

Be careful to avoid the many small holes in the sand that are filled with offerings to the goddess of the sea, Iemanjá.

As fireworks soar overhead, worshippers wade into the ocean carrying large bouquets of white flowers. Others fill small blue and white boats with offerings such as champagne, perfume and costume jewelry and send them out to sea. They hope that their gift is accepted and that Iemanjá will bless them for the next year. "Rejected" items, washed back to shore, litter the sand on New Year's Day. After midnight, roving bands start playing samba music that heralds the start of pre-Carnaval season in earnest. It's an event you'll always remember.

Language

Portuguese is the national language since it was Portugal that colonized the country in 1532 and ruled it till independence was declared in 1822.

Surprisingly, **English** rather than Spanish, is Brazil's second language, even though all of Brazil's neighbors are Spanish-speaking. Only in southern Brazil is Spanish the second language. English is taught in secondary schools and most educated Brazilians speak it. At the better hotels, restaurants and shops, the staff will include some English speakers, and it is not too difficult to navigate Rio and Brazil's other urban centers using only English.

Some Rio residents speak **Spanish**, too, so if you can speak that language and you have exhausted your English, try it. However, be forewarned that Brazilians resent visitors assuming they are Spanish-speaking. Every region of the country has its own intonation and Rio's Portuguese is more guttural than São Paulo's.

SIGN LANGUAGE

Cariocas use a "thumbs-up" signal constantly. It can mean *tudo bem* (everything is fine), it can mean okay, and can even mean hello or goodbye. It's always accompanied by a wide smile.

Tastes of Brazil

FOOD

Brazil is a vast country. Its land mass encompasses a huge variety of vegetation zones and climates. So it is not a surprise to find a

smorgasbord of cuisines and regional dishes as well.

Dishes

Dishes from the north and the Amazon Rainforest show Indian influences in the use of local fruits, vegetables and animals, as well as freshwater fish, including piranhas.

Dishes from the less verdant interior around Minas Gerais use lots of pork, plus vegetables and beans that grow in the area.

Two broad types of food define Brazilian cuisine. The first is the traditional dishes from the state of Bahia and the northeast region of the country. These regions had the largest sugar plantations and thus the largest number of African slaves. With meat a rare commodity, traditional Bahian dishes use lots of fish and shellfish, coconuts, rice (*arroz*), black beans (*feijão*) and *farofa* (from the root vegetable manioc) served browned with onions or bacon, or ground into flour. It's an acquired taste.

Here are some of the most common dishes found on Bahian menus:

- ***Canja*** is a soup that is thick with vegetables and pieces of chicken.
- ***Acarajé*** (ah-cahr-ah-jay) is like falafel. Diced shrimp, peppers and tomato sauce, called *vatapa*, are enclosed in a coating of brown beans and onions, then fried.

TIP: Avoid eating *acarajé* fried in *dendé* (palm oil). Your cardiologist will appreciate it.

- ***Empanados*** feature ground beef (chicken or crab), vegetables, olives and eggs enclosed in pastry dough and then fried. Empanadas in Spanish.
- ***Moqueca*** (moh-keck-ah) is a fish stew using coconut milk, lime juice, spicy peppers and onions in the sauce. It's traditionally cooked in a clay pot.
- ***Xinxim (jin-jim) de galinha*** is a chicken dish with chunks of meat marinated in garlic and lemon.
- ***Frango com arroz*** is comprised of chicken, rice, vegetables, hard-boiled eggs and olives. It's rather like paella without the shell fish.
- ***Feijoada*** is Brazil's national dish. It is a mixture of stewed meat (beef, pork, sausage) cooked in a spicy sauce and served with black beans, cabbage and farofa (a grain made from manioc). It is traditionally served for lunch on Saturday and on holidays.

In Brazil's smaller southern region, descendants of German, Italian and Swiss immigrants have retained many old-world customs and national dishes. But menus here, as well as in Rio, reflect the country's status as one of the world's biggest pro-

ducers and exporters of beef. They also reflect the fact that Brazilians love red meat, usually eating it for both lunch and dinner. Churrascarias (restaurants serving churrasco, or red meat) are the most popular eateries in the city, and Cariocas frequent them to celebrate family occasions, for business lunches, and to enjoy holiday dinners.

THE CUT

There are an incredible number of cuts of beef and many ways to prepare them, but the most common is to season them with rock salt and cook them over open fires using charcoal or wood. Sometimes they are cooked and served on elongated spits. The *picanha* (pih-cahn-yah) cut is a Brazilian favorite, but there are filet mignons, top sirloins and baby beef cuts as well.

Beef in Brazil is very lean. Picanha is fattier, and it's what most Brazilians prefer. In Argentina, very lean baby beef is the top choice.

Portuguese specialties such as codfish with onions and tomatoes remain a perennial favorite, and sushi is enormously popular.

Fruits

Brazilian fruits are exceptional. The pineapples here (*abacaxi*, pronounced ah-bah-cahshi) are so juicy and sweet that they hardly resemble those from Hawaii. Other fruits include *mamão* (muh-MOW, papaya), *melancia* (meh-LAAN-seeyah, watermelon) and *manga* (MAHN-gah, mango). Fruit juices are extremely popular here, and juice bars often offer over 50 different fruits from which to choose.

DRINKS

Cafezinho is the most popular drink. It's an espresso-size cup of thick black Brazilian coffee served with spoonfuls of sugar. ***Guaraná*** is a sweet fruit-based carbonated soft drink that is more popular than cola. American carbonated beverages are also consumed here. They are bottled in South America.

Bars and *botequims* (larger bars) are crowded from early afternoon till well into the night and beer is the overwhelming drink of choice. Unlike in the US, where beer is commonly consumed right from the bottle or can, draft beer (called Chopps) is more common. The most popular brands, Brahma and Antarctica, are available in bottles and cans as well.

You can't leave Rio without savoring the national cocktail, ***caipirinha*** (ky-peareen-yah), a refreshing drink that packs a wallop. It has diced lime, sugar (although you can request it without) and ice cubes. The alcohol is usually *cachaça*, a sugar cane-based brew, although you can substitute vodka, making the drink a caipiroska. New blends include passion fruit, strawberry and grape in place of the lime.

The foods and drinks we mention above are typical, but restaurants serve all kinds of cuisines, from burgers to sushi. Enjoy!

A Capsule History

Almost the size of the United States (3.6 million square miles for the US versus 3.2 square miles for Brazil) this mammoth country embraces half the land mass of South America.

Pedro Álvares Cabral

Discovered in 1500 by Portuguese explorer **Pedro Álvares Cabral**, Brazil's first settlement was Salvador, today in the state of Bahia. In January, two years later, a Portuguese ship sailed into Guanabara Bay. Thinking it was a river, they named it Rio de Janeiro (January River).

The land was densely forested so lumber became the primary export until it was superseded by a growing sugar market. Huge plantations were established and marauding groups of *bandeirantes* (mixed Portuguese and Indian men) supplied the plantations with Indian laborers. When the numbers did not prove to be enough, blacks were imported from Africa. The Portuguese, Indians and Africans intermarried freely, thus creating Brazil's brown-skinned population of today. For most of the 17th century, Brazil was the world's largest supplier of sugar. It was during this time that a wealthy elite emerged.

As the *bandeirantes* traversed the interior in search of Indian labor, they went as far west as the Andes and well into the Amazon Basin, in effect creating boundaries for the Portuguese colony. New sources of wealth emerged. Diamonds, colored gemstones, rubber and coffee were noteworthy, but it wasn't until gold was discovered that the population exploded. The gold rush created boom towns that boasted gold-laden Baroque churches. Since the most direct route to Lisbon was overland to Rio and then by sea to Portugal, the port and the population of Rio grew and by the early 1600s the population numbered over 3,000. The settlement expanded along the waterfront (today's downtown) and in 1763, Rio was named the capital of Brazil.

THE 1800S

Napoleon's rise to power was a turning point in the country's history. As his armies ad-

vanced on Lisbon in 1807, **Prince Regent João** decided to move his family and court to Brazil. He arrived with 15,000 noblemen and moved his family into a lovely building that his viceroys lived in. Called the Imperial Palace, you can visit it today. Brazilians were delighted by this decision and the large number of noblemen gave Rio a European veneer. João set out to improve life in the colony. He created the supreme military court, a naval academy, a medical school and the Bank of Brazil. He built palaces and, because he was an avid gardener, he surrounded them with magnificent parks and gardens. He established the Botanical Gardens inside Quinta da Boa Vista Park, which are still there today.

View of the Palace of the Quinta da Boa Vista in the early 19th century.

When Napoleon was defeated, João decided to remain in Brazil and, upon the death of his mentally ill mother, Dom João became King in 1816. He declared Rio the capital of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Azores, and ruled from the fledgling nation. This did not sit well with the leadership in Lisbon and political pressures forced Dom

João to return to Portugal in 1821. He appointed his son, Pedro, Prince Regent. The Brazilians, used to being at the heart of power, were dismayed at this return to secondary status, and it took only a year for them to convince Pedro to declare the country independent and to name himself Emperor Dom Pedro I of Brazil. Portugal was too weakened by European wars to protest too much and so the Brazilian Empire was established. Unfortunately, Dom Pedro proved to be an ineffectual leader and his reign lasted only nine years. He was forced to abdicate in favor of his five-year-old son who, at 14, became **Dom Pedro II**.

In contrast to his father, Dom Pedro II reigned for over 50 years, a time of great prosperity for Brazil. He encouraged education and opened Brazil's doors to new immigrants. The newcomers – Italians, Germans, Japanese and people from the Balkans – brought important skills that Brazil lacked. The population reached 800,000.

Dom Pedro II's reign came to an abrupt end in 1888 when his daughter, Isabel (shown at right below), declared emancipation for the slaves without providing compensation for their owners. That added impetus for the upper classes, who were agitating for a republic, to force

a military coup. Dom Pedro and his family went into exile in Paris. He died a few years later.

Brazil was declared a republic on November 15, 1889.

THE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL

The early republic did not fare well and corruption ran rampant. After a series of coups, the military installed **Getúlio Vargas** as president. Unfortunately, this was 1930 and Vargas' role model was Mussolini. Vargas ruled more as a quasi-dictator than a president, banning political parties and censoring the press. Although he made overtures to Germany in the early 1940s, he declared war on the Axis powers and 20,000 Brazilian troops took part in the invasion of Italy. The memorial to their bravery and those that lost their lives is in Flamengo Park.

Getúlio Vargas

After the war, another coup removed Vargas from power, only to see him return in 1950 as the democratically elected president of Brazil. Things did not improve and there were riots in the streets. The military again threatened a coup. Vargas, a proud man, refused to resign and instead retreated to the

president's office in Catete Palace, where he took his own life.

Juscelino Kubitschek

In 1956, **Juscelino Kubitschek** (called JK) was elected president, running on a pledge to move the capital of Brazil from Rio to a new city in the country's interior as an attempt to jump-start the economy. He put together a team of great architects and, four years later, Brasília became the country's capital. Unfortunately, Brasília did not spur economic growth; inflation and corruption remained. The military stepped in again, putting a military dictatorship at the helm. It wasn't until 1985 that a civilian was again elected president. A series of elected presidents followed, though none was particularly successful.

MODERN BRAZIL

In 2002, **Luiz Inácio Lulu da Silva** (called Lulu) was elected president and is still in office at this writing. He is the first working-class president in the country's history and he has pushed for many new social programs. Hopefully, Brazil's political situation has turned a corner.

Geography

Brazil, the largest country in South America, is the fifth-largest in the world. It covers half the land mass of the continent and touches every country except Ecuador and Chile. It can be divided into five regions – South, Southeast, Central-West, North and Northeast. Each region comprises several states and has a distinct landscape, almost as if it were a separate country.

THE SOUTH

Porto Alegre

The southern region is comprised of the states of Paraná, Santa Caterina and Rio Grande do Sul. Porto Alegre, the capital of Rio Grande do Sul is the region's most important city, while the most visited is tiny Foz do Iguaçu, home to Iguaçu Falls, in Paraná. The topography is basically flat with a lot of woods and fields. It is the coolest part of Brazil, with occasional snow. The south is very European in atmosphere and in the appearance of its residents, who are descendants of German and Swiss immigrants. Rio Grande do Sul is the home of the gauchos,

the tough cattle farmers that make Brazil one of the world's largest exporters of beef.

THE SOUTHEAST

The Southeast is made up of four states: São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais and Espírito Santo. It is the most productive and wealthiest region, and home to Brazil's two largest cities – São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Belo Horizonte in Minas Gerais has grown tremendously over the last few years. There are gold mines in the area. Espírito Santo is north of Rio and on the coast.

THE NORTHEAST

The northeast is where the first Portuguese settlement was made. It is comprised of nine states: Bahia, Pernambuco, Maranhão, Sergipe, Alagoas, Piaúi, Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte and Paraiba. This region has re-

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

The city of Maceió in Alagoas state

tained much of the culture of the indigenous Indians and African slaves, but is the poorest part of the country. Bahia is very religious and Salvador, its capital, is fascinating to visit. Recife, capital of Pernambuco state, has become a gateway for travelers from Europe. The other states are less important to travelers.

THE CENTRAL-WEST

The area known as Central-West is comprised of three states – Goiás, Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul. Largely an uncharted wilderness, the region exploded onto the world stage when Brasília, the country's capital, was built in Goiás state. The Pantanal, a huge wetland that is populated primarily by wildlife, extends to parts of Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul and is home to many endemic species.

© Editora Peixes/Embratur

Waterfall, Goiás

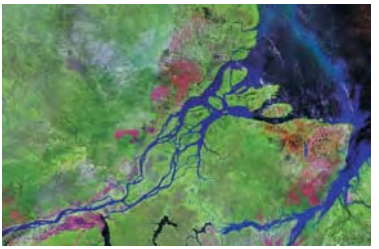
THE NORTH

The North is Brazil's largest region, covering more than 50% of the country. Here we find the Amazon jungle and river. The four states in the north are Amazonas, Pará, Rondônia

© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

Brazil
AMAPÁ
BR156
Macapá
BELÉM
SÃO LUÍS
FORTALEZA
BR230
BR222
MARANHÃO
Teresina
CEARÁ
RIO GRANDE DO NORTE
NATAL
BR343
BR316
BR230
João Pessoa
PIAUÍ
PARAÍBA
RECIFE
BR153
BR428
PERNAMBUCO
Palmas
BR135
BR020
ALAGOAS
MACEIÓ
BR110
SERGIPE
Jalapão
BAHIA
Aracaju
TOCANTINS
CHAPADA DIAMANTINA
SALVADOR
GOIÁS
BA263
ILHÉUS
D.F.
BRASILIA
BR070
BR135
BR251
Eunápolis
MINAS GERAIS
Goiânia
PORTO SEGURO
BR367
BR452
BR258
ESPÍRITO SANTO
BELO HORIZONTE
BR262
VITÓRIA
SÃO PAULO
BR381
RÍO DE JANEIRO
Atlantic Ocean
SÃO PAULO
RÍO DE JANEIRO
PARANÁ
BR116
CURITIBA
SANTA CATARINA
BR470
FLORIANÓPOLIS
BR101
PORTO ALEGRE
210 KM
210 MILES
N
HUNTER PUBLISHING

and Acré. The region's two major cities are Manaus in Amazonas, which is the gateway to the Amazon, and Belém, capital of Pará, at the rivermouth. Manaus was a boomtown during the rubber industry's growth and has an opera house where Caruso sang.



Courtesy NASA

View of the Amazon River

In *The Best of Brazil* chapter, we highlight places in all regions of the country that are worth your time to visit.

National Holidays

Banks, schools and government agencies are closed on the days listed below. Most shops stay open except for Christmas Day, New Year's Day and during Carnaval.

- **New Year's Day** – Jan. 1
- **Carnaval** – Date varies (often Feb)
- **Good Friday, Easter Sunday** – Dates vary (often Apr.)
- **Tiradentes Day** – Apr. 21 (honors Republic's hero)
- **May Day** (Labor Day) – May 1
- **Corpus Christi** – 60 days from Easter Sunday

- **Day of NS de Aparecída** (Brazil's religious patron) – Oct. 12
- **All Soul's Day** – Nov. 2
- **Proclamation of Republic Day** – Nov. 15
- **Christmas** – Dec. 25

For more detail on Carnaval festivities, see pages 149-157.

Brazilian Gemstones

Nature has been very kind to Brazil. It has stunning beaches, huge forests and fast-moving rivers, but nature's greatest gifts are those found in the ground – the magnificent colored gemstones that are Brazil's foremost ambassadors. Incredibly, over 90% of the world's supply are found here, as are diamonds. The stones are cut, polished and transformed into incomparable pieces of jewelry.

Some believe the stones have mystical powers enabling them to heal, to calm or offer hope. You can't fail to be impressed by the

© H. Stern

Artist at H. Stern Jewelers

gems. Shades of blue, green, purple, pink, peach, red, yellow and honey are just a few of the colors represented. If you still think of colored stones in terms of graduation rings and birthstones, you are in for a treat. Brazilian gemstones and jewelry are worn by royalty and well-known movie stars. Perhaps the aquamarine necklace and earrings worn by Catherine Zeta Jones at the Oscars are best known. Gemstones accessorize both formal and casual attire.

Rio is a great place to buy jewelry.

Three of the country's gemstones, whether by coincidence or not, are the colors of the Brazilian flag – yellow, blue and green.

Today, imperial topaz represents love, friendship & and affection.

Imperial topaz is the rarest of the gemstones. Its colors vary from intense yellow to peach, salmon and pink; shades often vary within one stone. Ancient Egyptians considered it an amulet against evil and believed it warded off weakness and granted courage. The name comes from Sanskrit, in which *tapas* means brilliance and fire. Since the topaz is found only in one mine in the state of Minas Gerais, the possibility exists that it will run out some day.

Aquamarines are a symbol of positive energy and eternal youth.

Aquamarines come in over 35 shades of blue from light to intense. The more intense the color, the more valuable the stone. The most abundant aquamarine mines are located in

the states of Bahia and Minas Gerais. Roman legends say the stone was a talisman against storms and protected sailors from the spell of mermaids. It is the stone most associated with Brazil.

Rubellites are red tourmalines with shades ranging from pink to deep red. They are often worn in place of rubies. Authentic rubellites have inclusions, or "feathers," inside.

Tourmalines are as colorful as rainbows. There are over 1,000 hues, making it the richest stone in colors and nuances. Tourmaline was one of the first gemstones found in Brazil. In 1664, Portuguese explorers went into the country's unexplored forests in search of wealth. They discovered mines in Minas Gerais, Bahia and Goiás. Tourmalines are the highlight of a visit to the H. Stern Museum in Ipanema, where his personal collection of over 1,000 pieces is on display.

Green tourmalines, the best-known color, are believed to bring prosperity.

Emeralds have lured treasure hunters and adventurers since ancient times because of their vivid green shades. They were favored by Cleopatra, who wore them as both ornaments and amulets. Emeralds are part of the same stone family as aquamarines.

Emeralds symbolize faith and hope.

Citrines vary from yellow to honey and seem to reflect the warm and joyful nature of the Brazilian people. Mystics believe citrines strengthen affectionate ties and true friendships that last as long as the stone itself.

Amethyst shades range from light purple to deep violet. They are believed to have the power to soothe.

Other Brazilian gemstones include beryls (in green, pink and yellow), garnets, opals and lapis lazuli.

Acknowledgment: Many thanks to the staff at H. Stern Jewelers for the definitive details about Brazilian gemstones.

Travel Information

Getting There

The only practical way to get to Brazil, whether from North America, Europe or other South American countries, is to fly. Cruise ships do make stops at cities along Brazil's Atlantic Coast, but the time involved does not make this a viable alternative if you want to spend time in Brazil. Distances are great (New York-Rio is 5,000 miles), which means flights are long (Los Angeles-Rio takes 14 hours), although most carriers offer overnight flights that make the trip seem shorter.

Courtesy H. Stern

Many airlines fly to Brazil. The two major points of entry are São Paulo's Guarulhos Airport and Rio's Galeão International Airport (also known as Tom Jobim International Airport). Gateway cities in the US include New York, Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles,

Boston, Washington DC and Atlanta. Canadian flights leave from Toronto.

AIR CARRIERS
■ US & Canadian
Air Canada, ☎ 888-247-2262, www.aircanada.ca
American Airlines, ☎ 800-433-7300, www.aa.com
Delta Airlines, ☎ 800-241-4141, www.delta.com
Continental, ☎ 800-231-0856, www.continental.com
United Airlines, ☎ 800-241-6522, www.united.com
■ Brazilian International Carriers
Varig, ☎ 800-468-2744, www.varig.com.br
Tam, ☎ 888-235-9826, www.tam.com.br
■ British Carriers
British Airways, ☎ 800-AIRWAYS (US), www.ba.com

NOTE: At this writing, all flights from New York fly non-stop to São Paulo, where there is a one-hour layover before the same plane continues to Rio. Non-stop flights go from Miami to Rio.

CUSTOMS

While Customs checks have become more stringent of late, the officers seem to be more concerned about Cariocas returning with huge packages and bulging suitcases, than tourists. Fill out the Customs form handed to you while in flight. Visitors are permitted to bring in items for their personal use, includ-

ing cameras and laptop computers. If you have nothing unusual to declare, the inspector should wave you through. However, there are spot checks and your bags may be x-rayed or manually inspected. These checks appear to be random.

IMPORTANT: You are required to have ID with you at all times while in Brazil (although no one has ever asked us for it). Rather than carry your passport, leave it in your hotel and, in lieu of it, carry a photocopy of the identification page. Other acceptable items include a driver's license or student photo ID.

Getting Ready

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Visitors to Brazil are required to have a **return air ticket** and a **passport** that remains valid for at least six months after the date of arrival. It must have blank pages so a Brazilian visa can be stamped onto one unused page.

Visas are required by nationals from countries that require visas for Brazilian citizens. At this writing, citizens of the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are among those that require visas. British citizens and those from European Union countries do not.

There are several visa types, but unless your situation is unusual (ie, going to study) you should apply for a regular tourist visa that permits stays of 90 days and can be ex-

tended. The visa fee is US $100 if you apply for it yourself. If a friend or a passport agency appears for you, the fee is US $110. Payment must be made in a US Postal Money Order payable to the Brazilian Embassy. You cannot apply for a visa by mail or courier; you or a person or agency acting for you must appear in person. Once issued, the visa is valid for five years and must be used within 90 days of issuance. The wait time is normally one day, but can be longer during peak travel times.

Visas are issued at Brazilian Consulates in Boston, Houston, Miami, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco, as well as at the Brazilian Embassy in Washington DC.

The Statler Building
20 Park Plaza, Suite 810
Boston, MA 02116
☎ (617) 542-4000
www.consulatebrazil.org

Park Tower North
1233 West Loop South, Suite 1150
Houston, TX 77027
☎ (713) 961-3063/3064/3065
Fax (713) 961-3070
www.brazilhouston.org

80 SW 8th St, Suite 2600
Miami, FL 33130
☎ (305) 285-6200
Fax (305) 285-6229
www.brazilmiami.org

1185 Ave of the Americas (Sixth Ave), 21st Floor
New York, NY 10036
☎ (917) 777-7777

Fax (212) 827-0225
www.brazilny.org

401 North Michigan Ave, Suite 1850
Chicago, IL 60611
☎ (312) 464-0244
Fax (312) 464-0299
central@brazilconsulatechicago.org

8484 Wilshire Blvd., Suites 711/730
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
☎ (323) 651-2664
Fax (323) 651-1274
www.brazilian-consulate.org

300 Montgomery Street, Suite 900
San Francisco, CA 94104
☎ (415) 981-8170
Fax (415) 981-3628
ww.brazilsf.org

3009 Whitehaven St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008
Fax (202) 238-2818
www.brasilemb.org

For more information or to download a visa application, log on to www.brasilemb.org

ENTRY/EXIT CARD

Sometime during your international flight you will receive an entry/exit form (*Cartão de entrada/salida*) to fill out. When your passport is stamped and your visa checked, the immigration official will keep the top half of the form and return the other half to you. Tuck it in your passport and don't misplace it. You will need it to exit the country.

Health Concerns

No **vaccinations** are required to enter Brazil. If you are spending your entire vacation in Rio or in any of the country's urban centers, no vaccinations are needed. As a general rule, it's a good idea before taking any trip abroad, to check your vaccinations to see that your immunizations are current. If you are planning eco-trips to the Amazon or the Pantanal, you should consider taking malaria pills. Discuss the idea with a physician who specializes, or is at least knowledgeable, about immunizations for foreign travel. Check the **IAMAT** website (International Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers, www.iamat.org), an organization that advises travelers of health risks and immunization requirements for all countries. Member doctors provide care to travelers around the world. All speak English or French in addition to their native language. ☎ (716) 754-4883, www.sentex.net/~iamat/.

Don't become a walking pharmacy. Virtually every over-the-counter medication sold in the US is sold in Brazil, usually at a lower price. If the names don't look familiar, describe your symptoms to the pharmacist. If you are taking prescription medication, be sure to pack a sufficient supply for your entire trip. Keep all your medications and an extra pair of prescription glasses in your carry-on bag.

Drinking water in Rio is safe to drink in hotels and restaurants. Some hotels even filter their water again. That means you can have

drinks with ice cubes in any established bar or night club. If you feel more comfortable drinking bottled water, there are several choices of both flat and sparkling. If you buy fresh fruit at a produce fair, peel it or wash the fruit before eating it. It is common practice for juice vendors (at a stand) to wash fruit before creating your drink; if they don't do this, ask. Be wary of buying food at sidewalk stands. Once again, common sense is the key to enjoying your stay in Rio.

Should you get sick, your hotel concierge is a good contact for assistance. Often, the hotel will have a doctor or dentist that can be called, and they sometimes come to the hotel itself. In an emergency, ask a policeman for the nearest emergency room or health clinic. Many Brazilian doctors are trained in the US.

TRAVELERS WITH DISABILITIES

Although the city government has taken steps to improve access for travelers with mobility problems by repairing sidewalks, lowering curbs and placing ramps at some museums and landmarks, Brazil still presents problems for disabled travelers. **Access-Able** is an umbrella organization for groups that help disabled people travel. You can reach them at www.access-able.com. One member group, the Travelin' Talk network (www.travelintalk.net), has members all over the world who offer assistance to other disabled travelers. They also publish a newsletter. An agency that offers escorted tours to a variety of destinations as well as customized

itineraries is **Flying Wheels Travel**, ☎ (507) 451-5005, www.flyingwheelstravel.com.

Weather

Since Brazil is in the southern hemisphere, its seasons are exactly the reverse of those in North America and Europe. Ninety percent of the country is in the tropical zone; the equator runs through the Amazon Basin. Rio has a classical tropical climate.

Summer, from December to March, is hot and humid with temperatures often in the 80s and 90s during the day, and sometimes reaching 104. Fortunately, trade winds cool things down a bit. Summer is also rainy season, which means there are short bursts of heavy tropical rain, but a short time later the sun appears.

Winter, from July to September, is very mild, with daytime temperatures ranging from 68-86 and lower humidity. Winter rains are more likely to be a drizzle than a downpour, but they can linger for one or two days. There is swimming and good beach days year-round.

The best time to visit Rio is spring or fall, but don't let the weather unduly affect your decision.

PACKING

Rio is warm year-round, so packing is simple, with lightweight cottons and linens suitable all year. For fall and winter, add some layers, long sleeved T-shirts, a light sweater or a pashmina for cooler nights.

Opposite: Lago Azul © *Christian Knepper/Embratur*

FASHION WATCH

What does change from summer to winter are the colors worn. Spring and summer colors are brighter and white is very popular since Cariocas have great tans.

Informality is king in Rio. Men will feel comfortable even in upscale restaurants in short- or long-sleeved collared shirts and slacks. You should pack a blazer, but ties are worn only at special events.

Cariocas are very fashion-conscious and European and designer sportswear is the clothing of choice.

TIP: Leave your jewelry at home and, instead, use scarves to accent your wardrobe.

Traveler's Potpourri

Airlines

Passengers should call the carrier at the local numbers, below, to confirm their return flight within 72 hours of departure.

Air Canada – ☎ 2220-5343
American – ☎ 0300 789 7778
British Airways – ☎ 0300 789 6140
Continental – ☎ 0800 702 7500
Delta Air Lines – ☎ 0800 221121
Tam – ☎ 0300 1231000

United Airlines – ☎ 0800 162323
Varig – ☎ 0300 7887000

Consulates

All foreign embassies are located in Brasília.

United States
Av. Presidente Wilson 147, downtown
☎ (21) 3823-2000

Canada
Av. Atlântica 1130, 5 Fl., Copacabana
☎ (21) 2543-3004

Great Britain
Praia do Flamengo 284, Flamengo
☎ (21) 255-9600

Australia
Av. Presidente Wilson 231, downtown
☎ (21) 3824-4624

Departure Taxes

The tax for international departures is US $36, or the like amount in reais (you cannot combine the currencies). Some carriers include the departure tax in the price of the ticket. If so, it will be listed on the face of the ticket. There is a US $8 departure tax for each domestic flight.

A 10 reais note

Electricity

Most sockets are 110V, 60 cycles. Some hotels have converters or special 220V sockets.

Money Matters

Currency

Brazilian currency is the **real** (RAY-al). The plural of real is reais (RAY-aish). There are both bills, printed on various color paper, and coins.

Bank hours are Mon-Fri, 10 am-4 pm.

1 real note . . . . green
5 reais note . . . purple
10 reais note . . . . red
50 reais note . . . brown
100 reais note . . . blue

There are 1, 5, 10, 25 and 50 centavo (cents) coins. There is also a 1 real coin in addition to a 1 real note.

Exchanging Money

Exchange rates fluctuate against foreign currency. The rate of the day is published in *O Globo* and *Jornal do Brasil* and posted in banks that exchange currency and at currency exchange offices throughout the city. The rate for exchanging cash is usually a bit better than that for traveler's checks, but it is not prudent to carry a lot of cash.

Traveler's Checks

American Express traveler's checks are used widely and the company has an office in Rio at Av. Atlântica 1702 in the Copacabana Palace Hotel, ☎ 702-0777, and at Galeão Airport. **Thomas Cook** and **Barclay's** checks are also widely accepted.

Credit/Debit Cards

Credit cards are widely accepted, which alleviates the need to carry a lot of cash or traveler's checks. Visa and MasterCard are the most common, but American Express and Diners are also accepted in most places.

Some small shops and restaurants do not accept AmEx cards.

Debit cards are not accepted in shops or restaurants, but Cirrus cards can be used at ATMs.

Tipping

Most restaurants add a 10% service charge to your bill. You can leave an additional amount for good service, as most Brazilians do. A service charge will also be added to your hotel bill to cover tips to hotel staff. Good sense means you should tip the concierge separately. Taxis do not expect tips, but it is polite to round the fare up to the next real. For special services such as manicures, tip as you would at home.

Telephones

The country code for Brazil is 55.

Making Calls

To call Brazil from abroad, dial your international access code (US/Canada 011, UK 00), then 55 (Brazil's country code), then the city code (omit the zero), plus the local number.

When dialing city to city within Brazil, you dial the city code (Rio's is 21) and the local phone number. When dialing within a city, dial only the local number.

TELEPHONE CODES FOR MAJOR CITIES	
Manaus	92
Iguaçu area	45
Brasília	61
São Paulo	11
Recife	81
Salvador area	71
Rio	21

The fastest but most expensive method of calling overseas from Brazil is to direct dial from your hotel. To get the outside line, dial 21 (to reach Embratel), then dial the country code (US/Canada 1, UK 44), plus the area code and then the local number.

Calling Cards

To use a calling card, check your carrier's access phone number before arriving in Brazil.

You'll need to first dial the access number, then punch in your calling card number, followed by the country code, area code, and local number.

Hotels add a service charge whether you direct dial or use a card.

DON'T HAVE A CALLING CARD?

Use ATT access, ☎ 0800-888-8288 or 0800-890-0288, country code, area code, number. Then you will be asked to dial in your credit card number. You can use American Express, Diners, Discover, MasterCard or Visa.

Public Phones

You can buy international phone cards (*cartão telefonico*) at newsstands. Phone booths look like elephant ears and are on major streets. Make sure it says *telefonista*

internacional (international telephone); most are for domestic calls only. Insert your card, enter 21 (Embratel) country code, area code, number. Good luck!

Cellular Phones

If you don't have an international plan but need contact, rent a cell phone here. You can make arrangements in advance with the following companies:

Connection in Copacabana. ☎ (21) 2275-8461, www.connectcomrj.com.br

Presscell in São Conrado. ☎ (21) 9617-2000, www.presscell.com

Time Zones

From April to September, Rio is three hours behind GMT, two hours later than New York and five hours later than Los Angeles. During daylight savings time, October through March, Rio is two hours behind GMT, one hour later than New York and four hours later than Los Angeles.

Rio de Janeiro

Arrival

Finally, your jet will start descending over the shimmering blue waters of Guanabara Bay. In the distance you'll see Corcorado Mountain with its towering statue of Christ the Redeemer welcoming you to Rio.

GETTING TO YOUR HOTEL

Rio's international airport (Galeão, aka **Tom Jobim Airport**) is a modern facility located on Ilha do Governador (Governor's Island) in Guanabara Bay, 13 miles from downtown Rio. You'll find a 24-hour bank, currency exchange kiosk, a tourist information booth and car rental offices.

Transportation options include pre-paid taxi companies, regular metered taxis and an airport bus service.

Fixed-Rate Radio Taxis

Your best option is a fixed-rate taxi that is comfortable, air-conditioned and very clean. Since the fare is pre-paid you will not be concerned about the route taken nor the traffic. Head to **Transcoopass** or **Cootrama**; their counters are hard to miss. Rates are posted and vary by the location of your destination. Expect to pay R $65 to the beach communities and R $47 to the city center, a bit more

Opp: Christ the Redeemer statue, courtesy H. Stern

than a metered cab. You will receive a voucher and an employee will escort you to your taxi.

Metered Taxis

City taxis will be lined up outside the terminal. They tend to be compact cars and not air-conditioned. Make sure the meter is running. You will need to have Brazilian reals (RAY-aish). Taxi drivers are not tipped, but most round the meter up to the next real (RAY-al).

Real/Reitur Turismo Buses

Air-conditioned buses leave from the terminal every 30 minutes starting at 5:30 am, with the last bus leaving at 11 pm. They make a stop in the city center (at the long distance bus terminal Novo Rio) and then head along the seafront, stopping in Flamengo, Copacabana, Ipanema, Leblon and Barra da Tijuca. The trip takes about one hour. Keep in mind that you will need additional transportation to your hotel, which may not be on the seafront street.

GETTING AROUND TOWN

By Taxi

There are two kinds of taxis. **Yellow cabs** have a blue horizontal stripe and a red license plate with white numbers. These safe, inexpensive cabs cruise and can be flagged on the street. They have meters, which they are required to use at all times. They should

not offer a fixed-price fare. When the meter is turned on, it should read tariff 1 and begin at R $3.30. It will then register R $1 for each additional kilometer.

> **NOTE:** Between 10 pm and 6 am and all day on Sunday and holidays, the meter will register tariff 2 at the start of your journey and it will calculate distances at a 20% higher rate.

Yellow cabs are usually compact cars and are rarely air-conditioned. They seat three people comfortably and four in a tight squeeze.

Radio taxis often work in conjunction with a hotel and fares can sometimes be prepaid. Air-conditioned sedans, they are not a uniform color. There is no meter in radio taxis, but there is a rate chart. Rates are 20% higher than those of yellow cabs. Have a restaurant or night spot call a radio taxi for you if it is late or if you do not see yellow cabs cruising. Two reliable companies are **Central de Taxi**, ☎ (21) 2593-2598, and **Transcoopass**, ☎ (21) 2560-4888.

By Metrô

Rio's Metrô is safe, clean, air-conditioned, fast and efficient. Unfortunately, it covers only a small part of the city. There are two lines. Line 1

(Red) runs from Saens Pena in Tijuca to Siqueira Campos in Copacabana. It has stops in Centro, Flamego and Botafogo en route. If you want to continue on to Ipanema and Leblon, buy a special ticket when you purchase the regular one and, when you exit at Sigueira Campos, hop on one of the free buses to complete your trip. Line 2 (Blue) runs from Estácio (downtown) to Pavuna (north-zone). Estácio station is the transfer point between the two lines. The Metrô runs Mon-Sat, 5 am-midnight, and on Sun, 7 am-11 pm. Fare is R $2.25.

> **WARNING:** Do not ride the Metrô late at night. Be aware of your surroundings when exiting.

By Bus

Buses are a great way to get a feel for Rio's many neighborhoods and landmarks. They run frequently, reach every part of the city and are inexpensive. The final destination is posted on the front, as is the route number. To further help, each stop is listed on the side of the bus. Popular routes are usually serviced by several route numbers, so if you are unsure which bus to catch, ask other people who are waiting. Everyone will try to help and, eventually, an English-speaking person will appear.

You enter a bus through the rear door, where you will be met by a conductor sitting at a turnstile. Try to have small bills in hand when you board.

There are two kinds of buses. Air-conditioned buses, called ***frescãos***, are enclosed, while tramlike ***jardineiras*** are open-sided. There are bus stops, but the driver will pull over only if someone is waiting. Wave firmly.

Pick up a bus chart/ route map from your concierge or from a Riotur kiosk.

WARNING: Although buses run 24 hours a day, ride only during daylight hours. Most importantly, do not board an overcrowded bus. Board only when you see open seats. That means you should avoid rush hours. Pickpockets here are real pros. Be aware of your surroundings when exiting.

By Car

We do not recommend renting a car in Rio, where drivers compete with those in Rome for speed and inexplicable lane changing. Traffic can be hectic and many streets are one-way, so it is not easy to find a good route. Rush hours are Mon-Fri, 8-9:30 am and 5-7 pm, but traffic is never light.

Parking is also a problem. Should you be lucky enough to find a spot, be aware that although there are no meters, there are "meter maids" – people assigned to watch cars and collect parking fees for a particular location. They wear badges.

If you do decide to rent a car, the agencies below have rental counters at the international and domestic airports, as well as the addresses below.

CAR RENTAL COMPANIES

Avis, Av. Princesa Isabel 350, Copacabana. www.avis.com.br

Hertz, Av. Princesa Isabel 500, Copacabana. www.hertz.com.br

Localiza, Av. Princesa Isabel 150, Copacabana. www.localiza.com.br

Rates vary according to the car model and whether it has air-conditioning. Expect to pay R $90 per day for a sedan with unlimited mileage. There are age, insurance and other regulations. It's cheaper if you make reservations from abroad.

DRIVING PERMIT REQUIRED

You are required to obtain an International Driving Permit in addition to your personal driver's license. Apply for one ahead of time at one of two government-authorized associations:

AAA, 1000 AAA Drive, Heathrow, FL 32745-5063; www.aaa.com.

American Automobile Touring Alliance (**AATA**), 1151 E. Hillsdale Blvd., Foster City, CA 94404, ☎ 800-622-7070; fax 650-294-7105.

By Ferry

Ferries do not transport people from one part of the city to another, but they are a pleasant way to reach **Niterói**, a small city across Guanabara Bay (it can also be reached by car). Ferries to Niterói leave very frequently from Estação das Barcas (dock) near Praça Quinze, downtown. R$2.

Rio Traveler's Potpourri

Airlines

You should call your carrier to confirm your return flight within 72 hours of departure. See page 42 for contact information.

Bookstores

Rio still has independent bookstores. They usually have a small selection of books in English, as well as cafés, Internet services and cultural events.

Livraria Renovar
Rua Visconde de Pirajá 273, Ipanema
Hours: Mon-Sat, 9 am-midnight

Letras E Expressões
Av. Ataulfo de Paiva 1292, Leblon
Hours: 24/7

Rua Visconde de Pirajá 276, Ipanema
Hours: 24/7

Leonardo da Vinci
Av. Rio Branco 185, Centro
Hours: 9 am-6 pm, closed Sun

Siciliano
Botafogo Praia Shopping, 4th floor
Hours: 10 am-10 pm

Av. NS Copacabana 766
Hours: 10 am-8 pm, closed Sun

Banks

The following Rio banks have exchange facilities:

Banks are open Mon-Fri, 10-4 pm.

Banco do Brasil
Downtown branches – Rua Senador Dantas 105, Rua Primeiro de Março 66
Copacabana branch – Av. N.S. de Copacabana 1292

Bankboston
Downtown – Av. Rio Branco 110

Citibank

Downtown – Rua da Assembléia 100

Traveler's Checks

American Express traveler's checks are used widely and the company has an office at Av. Atlântica 1702 in the Copacabana Palace Hotel, ☎ (21) 702-0777, and at Galeão Airport. **Thomas Cook** and **Barclay's** checks are also widely accepted.

ATMs

ATMs are located on major streets, in banks and in shopping centers throughout the city. Problems arise when your card is refused because it was issued abroad. Keep trying! Friends tell us HSBC ATMs have a high rate of success.

Key Streets

Av. Rio Branco (downtown), Ave NS de Copacabana, Copacabana, Rua Visconde de Pirajá, Ipanema, Ave. Ataulfo de Paiva, Leblon, Av. das Américas, Barra.

Music Shop

Musicale, with branches in Rio, is a great spot to pick up some Brazilian music. It has a huge inventory and English-speaking staff. Stop for a visit at Ipanema shops, Rua Visconde de Pirajá 207 and 483, or at Av. NS de Copacabana 1103.

Newspapers

No English-language newspapers are printed here. The ***International Herald Tribune*** is sold at some of the larger newsstands on Rua Visconde de Pirajá.

Pharmacies

There are many pharmacies along Rua Visconde de Pirajá and NS de Copacabana that open from 9 am-7 pm weekdays and 9 am-2 pm on Saturdays. The pharmacies below are open 24 hours a day.

Drogaria Pacheco
NS de Copacabana 534. ☎ (21) 2548-1525

Fármacia do Leme
Av. Prado Jr. 237. ☎ (21) 2275-3847

Photographic Resources

You can have your film developed quickly and buy supplies at the following shops:

Digi Art
Rua Mexico 31, downtown
☎ (21) 2544-1072

Fotosfera
Rua Viscônde Pirajá 571, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2511-2699

Postal Services

PO hours are 8-5 weekdays, 8-noon Saturday.

Correios (post offices) are marked by blue and yellow signs. Those on main streets are:

Downtown – Rua Primeiro de Março (near waterfront)

Copacabana – Av. NS de Copacabana 1059

Ipanema – Rua Visconde de Pirajá 452

Leblon – Av. Ataulfo de Paiva 822

Internet Access

WWW

Access to the Internet is offered throughout the city at Internet cafés. Fees vary, but are never prohibitive. Some cafés also have fax machines and international phones.

Café Libaldo
Letras E Expressões Bookshop
Rua Visconde de Pirajá 276, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2521-6110
Sun-Thurs, 8 am-midnight, Fri-Sat, 8 am-2 am.

Central Fone
Carioca Metrô Station, downtown
☎ (21) 2220-3841
Mon-Fri, 9 am-9 pm, Sat, 10 am-4 pm.
Av. Rio Branco 156, downtown
☎ (21) 2215-5541
Mon-Fri, 9 am-8 pm.

Cyber Coffee and Books
Livraria Saraiva

Av. das Américas 5000, Barra
☎ (21) 2431-6483
Mon-Sat, 10 am-10 pm, Sun, 3 pm-9 pm.

Tudo E'Facil
Av. Prado Junior 78, Copacabana.
☎ (21) 2543-7229
24 hours daily.

Tourist Information

Riotur is the city's tourist office. They have printed material in Portuguese and English, maps, bus route maps and helpful English-speaking staff.

Rua da Assembléia 10, 9th floor (downtown).
☎ (21) 2217-7575, www.riodejaneiro.com.br.
Hours: Mon-Fri, 9 am-6 pm.

RioTur also has kiosks. Those listed below are centrally located.

RIOTUR KIOSK LOCATIONS

Posto 6, Av. Atlântica at Av. Rainha Elizabeth, Copacabana. Mon-Fri, noon-6 pm.

Av. Princessa Isabel 183, Copacabana. Mon-Fri, 9 am-6 pm.

Alo Rio is an English-language phone service run by Riotur. ☎ (21) 2542-8080 or 2524-8004. Hours: Mon-Fri, 9 am-6 pm.

The **Tourist Police** can be reached around the clock at ☎ (21) 3399-7170. They have an English-speaking office at Av. Afrânio de Melo Franco 159 (at Rua Humberto de Campos), in Leblon.

Rio de Janeiro & Environs

Maracanã Stadium
Boa Vista Park
TO TOM JOBIM AIRPORT
SÃO PAULO - BRASILIA
PETROPOLIS - TERESOPOLIS
AV. RODRIGUES ALVES
TO RIO-NITEROI BRIDGE
City of the Samba
José Bonifácio Cultural Center
Snake Island & Ilha Fiscal
MARACANÃ
SANTO CRISTO
SAÚDE
Pinto Hill
Pier Mauá
AV PRES. VARGAS
AV 31 DE MARÇO
Itamaraty Palace
São Bento Monastery
CIDADE NOVA
ESTÁCIO
Republic Square
SAARA
CENTRO
Imperial Palace
ELEVADO PAULO DE FRONTIN
CATUMBI
Fine Arts National Museum
Ferryboat Station
TIJUCA
São Sebastião Cathedral
National Hist Museum
RIO COMPRIDO
Das Nevas Square
LAPA
LAPA ARCHES
CASTELO
NATIONAL
FOREST
PARK
SANTA TERESA
Chacara do Céu Museum
AV GEN JUSTO
Santos Dumont Airport
GLÓRIA
Modern Art Museum
Boticário Square
Igreja Glória
Gloria Marina
"Naif" Art Museum
CATETE
Guinlé Park
SILVESTRE
LARANJEIRAS
COSME VELHO
FLAMENGO
Flamengo Park
Flamengo Beach
Guanabara Bay
Botafogo Praia Shopping
HUMAITÁ
Indian Museum
Viuva Hill
BOTAFOGO
Botafogo Bay
Carmen Miranda Museum
FONTE DA SAUDADE
AV PASTEUR
Urca Beach
Saudado Hill
São João Batista Cemetery
BOTAFOGO
Rio Yacht Club
Cara de Cão Hill
Shopping Rio Sul
URCA
BAIRRO PEIXOTO
São João Hill
Babilônia Hill
Urca Hill
CABLE CAR
Cabritos Hill
Chacrinha Park
Cable Car Station
Sugar Loaf
AV PRINCESA ISABEL
COPACABANA
Vermelha Beach
LEME
AV ATLANTICA
Praça Lido Foir
Av. Atlantica Fair
Urubu Hill
Leme Beach
Copacabana Beach
Leme Hill
Shopping Cassino Atlântico
Copacabana Fort & Museum
Atlantic Ocean
N
HUNTER PUBLISHING
1 KM
1 MILE
© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

Orientation

Great cities inspire nicknames that say in a word or two what may take paragraphs to explain. New York is "The Big Apple," San Francisco is "The City By The Bay" and Rio is *Cidade Maravilhosa* (Marvelous City). It is an apt description because Rio is unlike any city you have seen – a great metropolis that is also a great resort.

Courtesy H. Stern

That is not to imply that Rio is without problems. There remains great disparity in wealth. While upscale residential areas in Barra and other beach-front communities continue to grow, too many Cariocas live in *favelas* (shantytowns). Some cling to mountainsides even in upscale areas and others are far from the city center. Unemployment, particularly in the *favelas*, is very high, while educational opportunities and health care are very poor. Drugs are a prime source of income and crime. In the 1980s, Rio began to feel the effects of ineffectual government policies. The city's infrastructure and older residential areas fell into disrepair as rampant inflation and implacable corruption meant less money for city services. Terrible press coverage gave the perception that the city was unlawful. While we don't want to

© Luoman/iStock Photo

A shanty town, or favela.

minimize the problems, it did seem for a time that every story about Rio was a negative one. Prospective tourists reading these stories in the international press began to stay away in droves. Somewhat surprisingly, that turned out to be a positive thing. Realizing that the city was losing a huge amount of income without visitors, both the city and the federal government began funding basic services such as better street lighting, sidewalk repair and improved sanitation. They determined to improve services in the *favelas* rather than try to hide them. But most importantly, they started to crack down on crime. The Tourist Police was created to patrol beaches, city streets and tourist venues. As a result, crime has fallen and the city looks cleaner and less chaotic.

Cars no longer park on the sidewalks and people who watch your car (should you be lucky enough to find a parking space) are licensed and charge set fees. If you use the

same common sense you would use in Chicago or Rome, you'll be unaffected by crime.

But we are assuming that you are not relocating here and have purchased this book as a guide to the sights, restaurants and night spots that make Rio a "Marvelous City." We'll concentrate on them.

Some Background

Rio is home to over seven million residents. At first it seems sprawling, but if you could hover over it, you'd immediately notice that the city is constricted by the waters of the bay and ocean and the mountain range and forest areas of **Tijuca National Park**. Parts of Copacabana are only four streets wide, while adjacent areas have much more land.

Rio has a deep natural harbor, which was what led the Portuguese to settle along the waterfront. As the colony grew, it expanded along the bay, inland and on the hillsides that loomed behind the colony. Eventually, more room was needed and the city expanded along its Atlantic coast. To reach it, tunnels were needed to get through the mountains. The first tunnel from the old city (Centro) to Copacabana was built in 1892 and the second to Leme, was finished 12 years later. There are now 13 tunnels within the city and you'll drive through many of them.

Neighborhoods

Rio has scores of distinct neighborhoods and landmarks to explore. They are located in broad geographical areas called Zona Norte (North Zone) and Zona Sul (South Zone), with Centro (Downtown) between them – literally. **Corcovado Mountain** and its **Christ the Redeemer** statue offer a visual landmark. The statue faces Botafogo and Guanabara Bay. Zona Norte is to his left and Zona Sul to his right.

Courtesy H. Stern

FAST-GROWING CITY

The city's western beach communities have grown enormously in the last 20 years, so much so that the city fathers are considering adding a Zona West, which would start at Barra da Tijuca and continue westward through Recreio das Bandeirantes.

ZONA NORTE

North Zone is the blue collar part of the city. It has working class residential areas,

favelas and heavy industries, but only a few spots of interest to tourists. You'll drive through parts of the North Zone on your way into the city from Galeão International Airport. **Maracaná Stadium**, the world-famous soccer and concert venue, is here, along with lovely **Quinta Da Boa Vista Park**, home to the **Zoological Gardens**. A popular street fair, the **Northeastern Fair**, is held here on weekends. Read more about it on page 124.

Maracaná Stadium

CENTRO

The commercial center of the city is marked by modern office buildings, banks and multitudes of people. There are also pockets of colonial-era buildings, churches and convents and several fine museums. Key streets:

Avenida Rio Branco, a wide north-south thoroughfare, runs the length of downtown from the Praça Mauá docks to Av. Beira Mar near Flamego Park. The Municipal Theater, Museum of Fine Arts and National Library are on it, alongside the city's tallest buildings.

Praças (Plazas) **Pio X** and **Quinze do Novembro**, near the waterfront, played important roles in the city's history. They house

Baroque churches, monasteries and the Imperial Palace. Av. 1 de Março connects them.

Largo da Carioca is a free-form plaza at the heart of downtown's shopping area and flower market. Many small streets lead to it. Rua Gonçalves Dias is one that is closed to vehicular traffic.

Cinelândia is the entertainment area of downtown. Lots of movie theaters and moderately priced restaurants are located here. **Rua Senador Dantas**, the area's main drag, is crowded on weekends.

Lapa is Rio's version of Montmartre. Once a funky bohemian area with popular restaurants and bars, it fell into disrepair and became a red-light district. Back and better than ever, Lapa has been refurbished and new samba clubs, theaters and restaurants have opened. There are still some questionable streets.

The tram to Santa Teresa leaves from Lapa.

> **TIP:** Don't wander through Lapa after dark. Stick to the brightly lit streets near Rua Lavradio, where new venues have opened. Call for a taxi to go back to your hotel.

Santos Dumont Airport, built on the same landfill strip as Flamengo Park, is Rio's domestic airport.

ZONA SUL

You'll spend virtually all your days and nights in the South Zone because that is where Copacabana, Ipanema and all of Rio's famed beach communities are located. Here

too are the city's finest hotels, restaurants, shopping venues and night life. It's where the action is.

Courtesy H. Stern

Copacabana's famous beach strip

South Zone Communities – Before the Tunnels

Glória, Flamengo & Botafogo

These residential areas lie between Centro and the tunnels to Leme and Copacabana (although they are officially in South Zone). Until those tunnels were built, these were the most upscale residential areas of Rio. Many of the 19th-century buildings have been renovated and young married couples and singles who work downtown have moved in to take advantage of lower rents. The Metrô makes stops here. All three areas face Guanabara Bay and have great views of Sugar Loaf. However, the residential areas are not directly on the water.

Glória's residential area is on the hilly ground overlooking Flamengo Park. You can't miss **Glória Church**, which has a prominent location and is illuminated at

night. It was a favorite of Dom Pedro II, who was married there and had his daughter Isabel baptized in it. Daily mass is held at the church. Glória's waterfront is very active and features plenty of marinas with ferries heading out on bay tours and trips to nearby islands.

Flamengo, adjacent to Glória, is best known for its park that follows the bay from downtown to Botafogo. The park is home to the **Museum of Art**, the **Carmen Miranda Museum**, the **WW II Memorial and Museum** and lots of sports venues. The grounds are lovely.

Botafogo, on the curve of Guanabara Bay nearest Sugar Loaf, has a commercial center, including **Rio Sul Shopping Center**, the oldest mall in Rio. It is home to the tony **Rio Yacht Club** and other marinas. There are good restaurants in the area.

Urca

Sugar Loaf is the well-known thimble-shaped mountain that guards the entrance to Guanabara Bay and can be reached by cable car. It's found in the small neighborhood of Urca.

Courtesy H. Stern

Santa Teresa

Santa Teresa, a hilly area inland from Glória, is one of the most interesting parts of Rio.

Art-deco houses, art galleries, handicraft stores and small eateries make it fun to stroll through. The **Chácara do Céu Museum** and **Ruins Park** are also here, and people who come get great views of the city. Take the *bonde* (tram) from Lapa to Santa Teresa. It's a great ride.

Cosme Velho

Even higher hills can be found in this neighborhood, set inland from Flamengo. It houses the terminal for the funicular railroad up Corcovado Mountain to the Christ the Redeemer Statue at its peak. The **Primitive Art Museum** and a charming colonial square are nearby.

South Zone Beach Communities

Leme & Copacabana

The resort heart of Rio, Copacabana is both a world-famous beach and a vibrant residential and commercial community. Leme and Copacabana's beach runs for over four miles. Scores of hotels, top-rated restaurants and lots of night spots are in Copacabana.

Key streets are as follows:

Av. **Atlântica** is the street that edges the sand. A four-lane thoroughfare, it has the black-and-white mosaic tile sidewalks designed by Robert Burle Marx, a well-known landscape artist. The near side of the street is studded with kiosks that sell fruit juices and other refreshments. There are marked bicycle and jogging paths. The far side has

© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

NOT TO SCALE

apartment buildings, hotels and cafés and is alive well into the night.

Av. N.S. de Copacabana, one block from the beach, is the community's most important shopping street. It also houses moderately priced hotels and restaurants.

Rua Barata Ribeiro is a primarily residential street two blocks from the beach. It has a few night spots.

Copacabana Fort, sits on a promenade extending into the Atlantic. It marks the western end of Copacabana, houses a small museum and Colombo Café. The views are stunning.

Ipanema

The beach that was made famous by Tom Jobim's song fronts Rio's most upscale residential area and its best shopping area. There are not many hotels, but the city's best restaurants are here, along with many bars and clubs.

Ipanema's famous beach

The following key streets will help you get your bearings in Ipanema.

Av. Vieira Souto, the beachfront promenade, is far less crowded than Copacabana. It has an active beach with sports fields, but draws a younger crowd. The far side has

Ipanema & Leblon
JARDIM BOTÂNICO
Parça Santos Dumont
R. JARDIM BOTÂNICO
JOCKEY CLUB BRASILEIRO
GÁVEA
Av. BORGES DE MEDEIROS
Parque Brigadeiro Faria Lima
Estádio de Remo
Praça N. S. Auxiliadora
R. TUBIRA
RUA GILBERTO CARDOSO
Ilha Caiçáras
LAGOA RODRIGO DE FREITAS
COPACABANA
Av. EPITÁCIO PESSOA
Parque da Catacumba
RUA POMPEU LOREIRO
AVENIDA EPITÁCIO PESSOA
RUA ALMIRANTE SADOCK
RUA ALBERTO DE CAMPOS
Parque do Cantagalo
RUA BARÃO DE JAGUARIBE
RUA NASCIMENTO SILVA
RUA REDENTOR
RUA BARÃO DA TORRE
Praça Nossa Senhora da Paz
ARPOADOR
AVENIDA VISCONDE DE PIRAJÁ
Praça Gal. Osório
RUA TEIXEIRA DE MELO
RUA DOS JANGADEIROS
RUA HENRIQUE DUMONT
RUA MARIA QUITÉRIA
RUA JOANA ANGÉLICA
RUA PRUDENTE DE MORAES
AVENIDA VIEIRA SOUTO
IPANEMA
Praça Grécia
Praça Almt. Saldanha da Gama
Praça Alcazar de Toledo
Praça Almt. Belfort Vieira
RUA ALM. PEREIRA GUIMARÃES
LEBLON
Av. HUMBERTO DE CAMPOS
R. DIAS FERREIRA
AVENIDA ATAULFO DE PAIVA
Praça Antero de Quental
Av. GENERAL SAN MARTIN
AVENIDA DELFIM MOREIRA
LEBLON BEACH
IPANEMA BEACH
ARPOADOR BEACH
Atlântic Ocean
Ilha de Palmas
Ilha Cagarra
Macuco Rio
Ilha Comprida
Arquipelago Das Cagarras
Ilha Rasa (Farol)
Ilha Redonda
N
HUNTER PUBLISHING
NOT TO SCALE
© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

residencial buildings primarily and only a handful of hotels and cafés.

Rua Visconde de Pirajá is the third block from the beach. It is lined with upscale shops and small shopping arcades. It's a great street to browse.

Praça General Osório is the site of the Sunday Hippie Fair, a handicrafts and folklore market. See page 124 for details.

Rua Garcia d'Ávila is a key cross street. H. Stern's head office and museum are here, as are designer shops.

Rua Paul Redfern is the final block of Ipanema before you come into Leblon. It runs only from the beach to Rua Visconde de Pirajá, but both sides of the streets have restaurants, bars, night clubs and gay clubs.

Rua Farme de Amoedo is another active cross-street. It has several gay-friendly clubs and bars. The beach in front of this street is a gay hang-out.

Leblon

Separated from Ipanema by a canal (Jardim de Alah), Leblon is a smaller version of that resort town. An upper-class enclave, it has the city's best restaurants, as well as good shops. It is quieter than neighborhoods. The

beach here draws families and well-toned singles.

Familiarize yourself with Leblon's key streets:

Av. Delfim Moreira is the beachfront street of Leblon. It has lovely homes but few hotels or restaurants.

Rua Gal. San Martin and **Av. Ataulfo de Paiva**, the second and third streets from the beach, are similar. They each have restaurants, busy bars and shops.

LAGOA RODRIGO DE FREITAS

Lagoa is a stunning lagoon inland from Ipanema and Leblon. Its six-mile perimeter is a green belt that houses four sports parks. It has bicycle and jogging paths. Good restaurants are also in the area.

The complete name is never used. Lagoa will do.

São Conrado

This quiet beach and residential area is a 15-minute drive from Copacabana through a new set of tunnels. Hang-gliders take off from a hill above this beach, landing on a section of it called Pepino. Growing quickly, São Conrado has new condos, a five-star hotel and golf courses.

Gavea Rock, a landmark boulder, delineates the boundaries of São Conrado and Barra, although both communities claim it as their own. It has a chiseled profile that allows viewers to imagine it resembles anything from a Viking to a hobbit. It rises sharply from the sea to over 2,600 feet/800 meters

Gavea Rock offers a challenge to hikers

and can be climbed by those with stamina (the hike often takes seven hours). Views en route, and especially from the peak, are stunning. Another way to view the rock is to hang-glide over it from the Pedra Bonita platform nearby. The landing point is on Pepino Beach near the rock.

ZONA WEST

Although not an official designation, the term "Zona West" is widely recognized.

Barra da Tijuca

Barra has the longest beach strip in the city, as well as the fastest-growing residential and commercial centers. It looks more like suburban US than anything Brazilian, with high-rise modern condos and apartment buildings. It has several huge shopping malls and scores of restaurants and night

clubs, many of which are branches of established spots in Copacabana and Ipanema. It was the site of the 2007 Pan-Am Games. Many new sports venues have been built.

Av. Sernambetiba is the beachfront street. Several luxury hotels have opened here, but it is not overrun by development.

Av. das Américas, several blocks inland, houses the malls and restaurants. It is a whirl of activity all day and well into the night. The malls stay open late and have movie theaters, so they have become Barra's social centers.

Tijuca Forest & Corcovado Mountain

Rio's most famous landmark, the Christ the Redeemer statue, stands at the top of Corcovado in Tijuca Forest. They are both within Tijuca National Park, Brazil's only national park in an urban setting. This is the entrance to Corcovado if you are driving.

© Rico/Embratur

Tijuca park is home to many birds and animals.

Sunup to Sundown

Since Rio's weather is near-perfect year-round, the beaches will fill many of your daylight hours. It's a rare day when the sun doesn't shine here, so swimming, sailing, surfing and waterskiing are almost always possible. You can explore a new beach each day or find one that fits your mood and stay with it. The delightful islands in Guanabara Bay and nearby in the Atlantic are worth exploring, too. They have glorious beaches and pristine reefs for diving.

© Anatoly Terentiev

View of the city from Guanabara Bay

But not all of Rio's pleasures are liquid. The city's most important sights are mountains. **Corcovado Mountain** is home to the magnificent **Christ the Redeemer statue** that can be seen from all parts of the city, while gum drop-shaped **Sugar Loaf** separates Guanabara Bay from the Atlantic Ocean and guards the harbor entrance. Reached by cog railroad and cable cars, the mountains should not be missed.

Another key site is **Tijuca Forest**, one of eight forest areas within Tijuca National Park. A paved road that runs through the forest leads to Corcovado, with picnic spots

and viewing areas along the way. You can explore the forest by car or jeep, as well as on foot. Reliable adventure and ecological tour operators lead daily trips on some of the 200 trails.

The oldest part of the city, the "downtown" commercial center, has many historic buildings, including churches and convents that have striking architecture and house works of art. We'll suggest a walk that includes many of them as well as the area's bustling shopping streets that are closed to vehicular traffic. From downtown, you can hop on an open-sided tram to Santa Teresa, an older part of the city that has retained its cobblestoned streets, fabulous homes and art galleries.

Santa Teresa's tram, called the bonde by locals.

Over 90% of the world's **gemstones** are found in Brazil, where they are mined, delicately cut, polished and set in stunning 18K gold settings. Others are roughly cut and shaped into jewelry boxes, paper weights and book-ends – all great gifts. **H. Stern**,

Brazil's renowned jeweler, with shops in the US and Europe as well as all over Latin America, has organized a museum in his Ipanema headquarters. If you visit, you'll follow the extraordinary journey of a plain-looking rock as it becomes a gem. Tours are free and fascinating and you are under no obligation to buy, but be aware that your willpower will be tested.

You may be surprised to learn that Rio has many **museums** – displaying everything from modern art to Carmen Miranda. We've detailed several we think you'll enjoy.

Cariocas love **street fairs** and there are scores of them. Some are massive, taking up whole streets and squares. They sell fresh produce or handicrafts, jewelry and original works of art. Others sell chic beachwear. Check with your concierge for the one nearest your hotel.

Add to the above exciting spectator **sports** and fabulous **shopping** malls and you can see that your daylight hours here will be filled with fun.

Let's start with the sea and sand.

BEACHES (PRAIAS)

Rio is a city where the city is the beach and the beach is the city. With over 30 miles of beach in the metropolitan area, the city is ringed by water. Cariocas flock to the sand year-round. They are social centers where friends meet, play soccer and volleyball, exercise and swim. Unlike beaches in the US where people bring picnic lunches, eating

here is confined to the chairs and tables at the kiosks that dot each beach strip. Soft drinks, juicy pineapples and coconuts and sun-tan products are sold on the sand by roving salesmen. Although some kiosks rent beach chairs and umbrellas, most Cariocas bring a *canga* (pareo) or straw mat to recline on. Some kiosks rent watersports gear such as surf boards and windsurf equipment.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

TIP: The minute bathing suits worn by women of all ages, sizes and shapes here are called *tangas*. They don't leave much to the imagination. Men favor brief-style suits as well. The sun is very strong here so don't forget your sunscreen and a hat.

Avenues that are adjacent to the beach – such as Avenida Atlântica in Copacabana and Avenida Viera Souto in Ipanema – have lanes closed to vehicular traffic on Sundays, allowing people to walk, bicycle and skate without dodging cars.

Atlantic beaches from Leme to Leblon are identified by the numbers of their life-guard stations called *Postos* (POSH-toes). The numbers are highly visible.

Although you will feel comfortable at any of the beach areas, they are not identical. Some have waves just right for surfers, while others have calm waters just right for swimming. Posto 1 in Leme, home to the beach volleyball arena, is favored by serious volleyball players, while number 9 in Ipanema is favored by gays and number 11 in Leblon attracts families.

Be aware of the flags posted on the beach by the lifeguards. Many of the beaches have been widened by landfill and the waves and undertow can be stronger than they appear. The color-coded flags follow those of traffic signals.

BEACH TIPS

We've noted the tips below previously but they bear repeating:

- Never take valuables to the beach
- Do not leave your items unattended
- Stay alert to activities nearby
- A red flag means "do not swim"
- Note lifeguard stations and tourist police stations
- Bring sunscreen, a hat and a towel or mat
- Enjoy yourself – everyone around you will be having a great time

Guanabara Bay

Flamengo and **Botafogo** are the beaches closest to downtown. Flamengo, adjacent to the park of the same name, offers great views of the sun setting over Sugar Loaf. Botafogo is home to the exclusive Rio de Janeiro Yacht Club. Ferries and hydrofoils leave from marinas here for islands in the bay and sightseeing cruises.

Urca and **Vermelha** (Red Beach) are small sand strips at the base of Urca Mountain and Sugar Loaf. They have thick, dark sand.

> **CAVEAT:** Guanabara Bay (near the city) is often polluted, so it is best to avoid swimming here. Water conditions are posted at the beaches.

Atlantic Ocean Beaches

The beaches that follow are listed geographically, moving westward from downtown.

Leme, actually the easternmost part of Copacabana Beach, is the first beach area you come to on the ocean. Leme is at Posto 1. Less crowded than its sister beach, Leme

lures serious volleyball players. Stands have been erected so you can watch.

Copacabana may be the world's most famous beach – certainly it is the most photographed. Avenida Atlântica, the beachfront boulevard whose sidewalks have a black-and-white mosaic pattern, is lined by residential buildings, hotels and cafés. The beach itself has been widened by landfill and covered anew by thick white sand. The beach is a swirl of activity, with soccer matches, flying kites and machetes slicing open coconuts and pineapples. Crowded on weekends, it draws Cariocas from all parts of the city and all walks of life. Copacabana runs from Posto 2 to Posto 6.

> **NOTE:** Leme and Copacabana stretch for four miles. They end at Copacabana Fort (See *Museums*, page 120).

Praia do Diablo (Devil's Beach) and **Arpoador**, just west of Copacabana Fort, are great for surfing. The waters are noticeably rougher here. Arpoador is lit for night surfing.

Ipanema and **Leblon** beaches front Rio's most exclusive residential areas. Apartment buildings and lovely private homes predominate and few hotels front the beach. Beach goers here are chic, fit and young. Gays gather on Ipanema Beach, while families head to Leblon. Both of these beaches are less crowded than Copacabana.

Opposite: Copacabana © Xin Zhou/Dreamstime

NOTE: Although they look like one beach strip, Ipanema is separated from Leblon by a canal that links the Atlantic to Rio's stunning lagoon.

Vidigal, not contiguous to Leblon, is a 10-minute walk away. It is home to the Rio Sheraton Hotel and the beach, although open to the public, is used primarily by hotel guests and local residents.

The beach areas that follow were virtually undeveloped a decade ago. They have undergone tremendous growth, practically exploding with new condos, shopping centers, hotels and many exciting new restaurants.

São Conrado beach is in the Gávea section of Rio de Janeiro. It is three-quarters of a mile long and fronts the luxurious Intercontinental Hotel. Pepino, one inlet of the beach, is where the hang-gliders come back to earth. The beach is favored by local residents.

Look for the Barraca do Pepe kiosk if you want to rent gear for windsurfing or kite-surfing.

Barra da Tijuca, measuring 10 miles, is the longest beach strip in the city. It has been transformed from an underutilized beach area into a thriving, bustling community. New hotels and scores of high-rise condos have been built, attracting yuppies and singles who meet on the beach.

Recreo dos Bandeirantes, the next beach, stretches for two miles and offers good swimming. Marked by a large rock, the beach is quiet and far less crowded than Barra.

Prainha, the western tip of Recreo Beach, is a secluded area that is known for its waves. Surfers predominate here. It has an extraordinary setting, located between two hills.

Grumari and Barra de Guaratiba are adjacent to one another yet their waters are very different. Grumari, known for its reddish sand, is undeveloped. Its waters are rough, and only strong swimmers head into the water here. Guaratiba is small and tree-lined, with calm waters just right for swimming. It is not easily accessible, with the only access via narrow trails.

Sepetiba, 50 miles from downtown Rio, is the last beach within Rio's metropolitan area. It has calm waters and soothing mud deposits. It's virtually deserted except on weekends.

BEACH BUS

A special bus makes stops on Copacabana, Ipanema, Leblon, São Conrado, Barra da Tijuca and Recreo. It leaves from Copacabana at 7 am, 10 am, 1 pm and 4 pm each day and carries 30 passengers. The ride – from one end to the other – takes 1½ hours. Look for the surf bus signs one block inland from the beach when heading west. ☎ (21) 2539-7555.

MORE SEA & SAND

Paquetá Island

For a relaxing day of swimming and snorkeling, hop on a ferry or hydrofoil and head to Paquetá Island in Guanabara Bay. The auto-free 250-acre island has many pristine beaches and coral reefs. It is home to 5,000 permanent residents, primarily fishermen, though that number swells with Cariocas who own vacation homes here. Because Paquetá is located at the top of the bay away from the mainland, the waters surrounding it are clear and unpolluted, while the sand is soft and white. You can walk or bicycle around the island. But the most enjoyable mode of transportation is a horse-drawn wagon, which meanders along the paths.

The main beach is **José Bonifacio**. Others include **Tamoio**, **Moreninha** and **Praia das Gevotas** (Gull Beach). All have changing facilities and bathrooms. You can bring a picnic lunch or head to one of the inexpensive seafood eateries.

A trip to Paquetá is a lovely way to spend a day, and the ride through the bay offers great views of the city and passes under the Niterói Bridge. You can take a ferry (75 mins, $3, ☎ 21-2533-6661) or a hydrofoil (just over an hour, $4.50, ☎ 21-2533-4343). Both leave from the marina at Praça Quinze de Novembro, Centro. Ferries run from 7 am till 11 pm daily, except on Sun. Check schedules.

Opp: High tide © Christian Knepper/Embratur

Cruising in Guanabara Bay

For a different view of the city take a leisurely cruise around Guanabara Bay. Among the sights are the Niterói Bridge, historic Santa Cruz Fortress, Sugar Loaf, Jurujuba Beach (where fishermen bring their catch), the Museum of Contemporary Art in Niterói and some offshore islands. All boats come with a guide who describes each sight and offers insight into the history of Rio, in a variety of languages. Reliable operators include:

Barcas S.A. leaves from Praça Quinze de Novembro Boat Dock. Sundays at 10 am. ☎ (21) 2533-66661.

Macuco Rio leaves from Av. Infante Dom Henrique, Glória Marina. Ask for the historical and cultural tour of Guanabara Bay. They also offer scuba trips. Call for current schedules. ☎ (21) 2205-0390.

Marlin Yacht Charters leaves from Av. Infante Dom Henrique, Glória Marina. it offers two-hour schooner trips, often at sunset, as well as four-hour excursions to the lovely Cagarras Islands in the nearby Atlantic. Check current schedules. ☎ (21) 2225-7434.

Saveiros Tours runs schooners that also leave from Av. Infante Dom Henrique, Glória Marina for a leisurely cruise around Guanabara Bay. You can reserve in advance. Daily cruises leave at 9:30 am and 11:30 am. Check schedules. ☎ (21) 2225-6064.

Espaço Cultural da Marinha's bay cruise offers the unique twist of using the tugboat *Laurindo Pitta*. The boat was built in England

in 1910 for the Brazilian Navy, and it even saw action in WW I. The trip lasts 1½ hours and concentrates on the nearby bay islands, the war ships anchored there and the historical sites en route. The boat leaves from Av. Alfredo Agache dock at Praça Quinze. Trips are currently scheduled at 1:15 pm and 3:15 pm, Thurs-Sun. You can pick up tickets from 11 am in the day of your tour. ☎ (21) 2104-6879.

MOUNTAIN LANDMARKS

© Marcaux/iStockPhoto

Corcovado Mountain

Considered Rio's top tourist attraction, Corcovado (Hunchback) Mountain is crowned by a 120-foot-high statue of Christ the Redeemer whose arms are outstretched to welcome visitors. Facing Botafogo, the statue is visible from virtually every part of the city, especially at night when it is illuminated.

The idea for the statue arose in 1921, Brazil's centennial, and it was actually erected over five years from 1926 to 1931. The enormous cost was paid for by donations collected in all churches throughout the country. The initial construction started in Paris under the direction of French sculptor Paul Landowski. Concrete and granite were used, then covered in soapstone. The statue weighs 1,450 tons and the reach from fingertip to fingertip is 75 feet.

Corcovado Mountain, part of Tijuca Forest, stands at 2,400 feet (the statue adds an additional 100 feet). A small park area at the base has the customary souvenir shops and snack stands. Elevators and escalators are recent additions, but many visitors climb the 227 steps from the park to the peak, where the statue is located. From scores of viewing areas on the peak, the entire glittering city stretches out below you. You can spot Sugar Loaf, beaches, Maracaná Stadium, Lagoa, Centro (downtown Rio) and the smaller city across the bay, Niterói.

You'll no doubt see groups of young people climbing the mountain paths to the peak. You can do the same, but only with a group. (See *Hikes*, page 139). Do not hike on your own.

King Dom Pedro I was one of the first to climb the mountain and his son, Dom Pedro II,

gave permission for a cog railroad to be built. It took the Swiss company three years to build it and the first passengers were carried in 1885. The railroad still functions today.

Since Corcovado is in Tijuca Forest, you can combine the two experiences. The paved road that winds its way through the forest passes several observation points. There is a small chapel and, if you look to its right, you'll see Rio's largest *favela* (shanty town), **Rocinha**, which sprawls across Dois Irmáos (Two Brothers) Mountain – a sobering sight. (See *Tijuca Forest* for details.)

Getting Here: You have several options, but the cog railroad is the most fun. The train rises almost vertically through the forest. Face downhill for the best views. The trip takes 30 minutes. The terminal is at Rua Cosme Velho. Trains leave on the half-hour starting at 9 am and ending at 6 pm. RT $ 25 adults, $10 children. ☎ (21) 2558-1329.

The train does not stop at observation points.

You can drive through Tijuca Forest on your own or you can hire a taxi. Stop en route for a picnic lunch. Organized tours are another option. They offer the benefit of detailed commentary and stops along the journey. Some reliable companies include:

Rio By Jeep, ☎ (21) 2572-8626, www.riobyjeep.com

Rio Adventures, ☎ (21) 2705-5747, www.rioadventures.com

As previously noted, you can join a group and hike to the peak and through parts of the

forest. Try **Trilharte Eco-tourism**, ☎ (21) 2245-5626, www.trilharte.com.br.

> **TIP:** Leave some time after visiting Corcovado to explore the **Museum of Primitive Art** at Rua Cosme Velho 561 and Boticário Plaza at # 822. (See *Museums*, page 117 for details).

Sugar Loaf Mountain (Pão de Acúcar)

Rivaling Corcovado as Rio's most popular attraction is the famed Pão de Acúcar, a thimble-shaped mountain that is Rio's answer to the Eiffel Tower. It rises from Guanabara Bay at the entrance to Rio's harbor. At a height of 1,325 feet, this lovely brown mountain offers exquisite views of the city from an entirely different vantage point than Corcovado. It is reached by two cable cars that were featured in an early James Bond film.

Hard to resist, Sugar Loaf has been climbed many times – the first by a British woman in 1817. She planted the British flag at the peak setting the stage for Brazilians – and lots of other nationals – to plant flags. Climbing is still a popular weekend activity.

The idea for the cable cars first surfaced in 1908. The first run, in 1912, reached 770 feet to the peak of Urca Mountain, adjacent to Sugar Loaf.

Urca, which has a larger summit than Sugar Loaf, is a popular recreational area with playgrounds for children, a theater, a restaurant, souvenir shops, snack stands and lots of benches.

When you're ready, stroll to the terminal for the second stage of the trip – from Urca to Sugar Loaf. It takes just a few minutes, but the ride is practically straight up. Views include Niterói, Copacabana and Leblon, Corcovado and a variety of forts and islands around the bay.

© Wesley Silveira/Dreamstime

The cable car ride to the tip of Sugar Loaf is not for the faint of heart

Getting There: The cable cars carry 75 passengers. The sides are virtually all glass. The station is at 520 Avenida Pasteur, known as Praia Vermelha (Red Beach) in Urca. The first car leaves at 8 am and the last at 10 pm. A night-time visit is really special, but can be windy and cool so bring a sweater. ☎ (21) 2546-8400.

A WALKING TOUR OF CENTRO

Rio has expanded rapidly westward and new residential and commercial centers have relocated or opened in these areas. Although few Cariocas live downtown, the area where the city was founded, it remains the commercial heart of the city. Tall, modern buildings filled with law offices, hi-tech computer companies and banks stand side-by-side with well-preserved buildings from the colonial era through the Empire and the proclamation of the republic. Centro remains the meeting place for Brazilian society, political figures, important business leaders and those in the arts. While serious business takes place here, Brazilians never forget how to have fun; there are lots of good restaurants, bars and night spots.

You'll immediately notice the quicker pace, the broader mix of people and the insane traffic. But, if you don't explore Centro, you'll return home thinking Rio is a resort with great food. To savor the different beat, rhythm and sounds of Rio, you need to explore on foot. We suggest a walk through parts of downtown, detailing historic churches, palaces, plazas and museums en route. But no one spot is crucial to your understanding or enjoyment; just enjoy the experience.

WARNING: Common sense dictates that you walk through downtown Rio during business hours. It is not a place to wander through streets that are deserted.

Centro Histórico

Church
Metro

1. Banco do Brasil Cultural Center
2. Chacara do Ceu Museum
3. Sáo Sebastião Cathedral
4. National Fine Arts Museum
5. Lapa Arches
6. Teles Arch
7. National Library
8. France Brasil House
9. Municipal Theater
10. Colombo Tea House & Restaurant
11. Navy Cultural Center
12. National History Museum
13. Imperial Palace
14. Modern Art Museum
15. Candelaria Church
16. Carmo Church
17. Royal Portuguese Library
18. João Caetano Theater
19. Das Neves Square
20. Itamaraty Palace

NOT TO SCALE

© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

Praça Mauá, where the cruise ships dock today, was the hub of fledgling Rio, a town built around Guanabara Bay. Start your walk at Av. Rio Branco (downtown's main thoroughfare) and Rua Dom Gerardo, a stone's throw from Praça Mauá. At #68 Rua Dom Gerardo you'll find **São Bento Church and Monastery** (Igreja e Mosteiro de São Bento), set on top of São Bento Hill and best reached by the elevator next door at #40. The monastery was founded by two Benedictine monks in 1590. The church, which still functions, was built between 1617 and 1641 and dedicated to Our Lady of Monserrat. It houses the finest example of religious Baroque art in the city. Gold was mined in Minas Gerais and Ouro Preto and brought to Rio to be shipped to Portugal. Clearly, lots of it never made the trip and ended up as gold leaf in these two structures. You'll also see large ceramic vessels, paintings, silver candlesticks and paintings by men, including friars, who were considered master craftsmen in their time. The grounds are beautiful.

The monastery is not open to the public except for special events. It houses a theological college and retreat house.

Masses are held at 8:30 am, 10 am and 6 pm. The 10 am service is accompanied by Gregorian chants, making it very popular. ☎ (21) 2291-7122.

Take the elevator down and continue along Rua São Bento to Av. 1 de Março (First of March), which wends its way through this historic district. You'll soon find yourself at **Praça Pio X** (Plaza Pius 10) and **Candelária Church** (Igreja N.S. da Candelária). When it was built, the church was at the waterfront, but landfill projects have since added several

streets along the shoreline. From docks here, ferries and hydrofoils leave for Niterói, Paquetá and Fiscal Island.

N.S. = Nossa Senhora (Our Lady).

Candelária Church has a wonderful story to tell. In the late 16th century, Antônio Martin Palma, a ship captain, was nearly shipwrecked during a violent storm. He promised Our Lady of Candelária that, if she saved him, he would build a church in her honor. He survived and built his rustic church with its main doors facing the sea, rather than the plaza, as is traditional. It became known as a mariner's church.

A century later, in 1775, a new church was designed for this location and, when it was dedicated in 1811, the Prince Regent attended the ceremony. It has been remodeled twice since then, though the 1775 façade remains. The layout is in the form of a Latin Cross and the interior is covered with marble, uncommon here since most Portuguese churches use engraved woods. The dome, the church's most striking feature, is built of limestone shipped from Lisbon and added in 1877. Other striking features are the stained glass windows, the tooled bronze doors made in France and the ceiling murals that trace the

© Fulviusbsas

Candelária Church

history of Candelária. The church has so much appeal that many society weddings are held here. There are also musical events. Hours: Mon-Fri, 8 am-4 pm; Sat-Sun, 8 am-noon. ☎ (21) 2233-2324.

> **CULTURAL NOTE:** Praça Pio X also faces Av's Rio Branco and Presidente Vargas, downtown Rio's main arteries. Vargas is so wide that the Carnaval samba school's parades were held here until the Sambodrome was built.

The next stretch of Av. 1 de Março houses cultural centers and private clubs in well-preserved buildings. You'll soon find yourself at the most historic site in the city – Praça Quinze de Novembro, invariably referred to as **Praça Quinze**. The plaza, its buildings, monuments and statues were central to the history of both the city and country.

In 1590, Carmelite fathers built a convent on this site. Later, in 1700, the government of Rio bought some property from the fathers and used the land to build royal warehouses, which they expanded several times. The area later included the mint. At that time, the plaza was known as the Largo do Carmo (Carmelite). One attractive building became home to the viceroys governing Brazil for Portugal. In 1808, when the royal family was forced to flee to Brazil in front of Napoleon's advancing army, they moved into the building and it then became the Royal Palace (Paço Real). The square was renamed Largo do Paço. When Dom João was crowned Emperor upon the death of his mother, Rio be-

© Fulviusbsas

Main entryway to the Imperial Palace.

came the capital of the Portuguese Empire. The palace was then renamed the Imperial Palace (Paço Imperial), a name that remains today. When Dom Pedro I, João's son, refused to return to Portugal even after Napoleon was defeated, the Brazilian Empire was born. His son, Dom Pedro II, followed his father's path and the empire lasted 67 years until Dom Pedro II's daughter, Isabel, signed a document abolishing slavery. The uproar caused by her decision forced the royal family to abdicate and on November 15, 1889 Brazil was declared a republic. Rio was named its capital and a year later, the plaza was renamed Praça Quinze de Novembro, or Praça Quinze, to mark the event.

The Imperial Palace at #48 is open to the public and now serves as a cultural center. Inside, look for the "archer's room" on the ground floor, which has retained its original stone floor. Hours: Tues-Sun, noon-6 pm. ☎ (21) 2533-4407.

The pyramid-shaped fountain in the plaza was sculpted in 1789. It was fed by the Carioca River to provide water for sailors. As you stroll by, take a look at the monuments to the country's Independence heroes.

Also in the plaza (on Av. 1 de Março) is **Carmo** (Carmelite) **Church** built in Baroque style in 1752. Emperors Dom Pedro I and II were crowned here and it functioned as the Imperial Chapel. When Rio became a republic, Carmo Church was named Rio's cathedral and remained so till 1980 when Saint Sebastian Cathedral was built near Largo da Carioca. There are silver items and paintings, but the most visited exhibit is the golden rose presented to Princess Isabel by Pope Leo XIII.

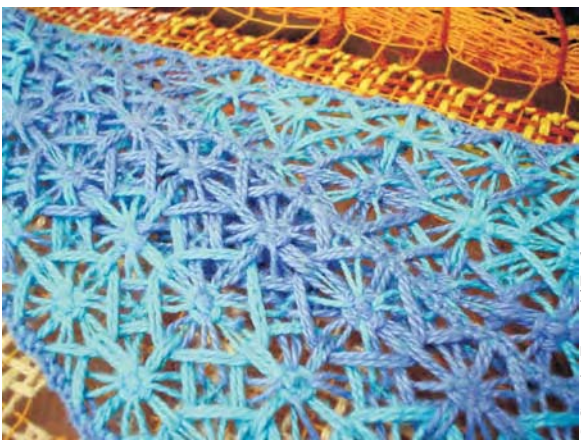
Look for the arch between numbers 32 and 34 in the plaza. The **Teles Arch**, the last colonial arch in the city, is named for the wealthy merchant who had it built in the 18th century. It was designed to connect two two-story buildings, balcony-to-balcony, to create a direct path from the plaza to the Travessa do Comércio in the financial center. The Travessa is lined with well-preserved two-story houses. This cul-de-sac is now an afternoon after-work hangout with restaurants and bars.

Other interesting buildings in the plaza area include **Tiradentes Palace** (now the Legislature) and the **Church of São José** on Av. 1 de Março.

Follow Rua São José from Praça Quinze to Av. Rio Branco. At this point, you have two options. You can cross Rio Branco and explore the area around Largo da Carioca, the hub of downtown Rio's shopping district. It's a great spot to feel the beat of today's Rio and, best of all, Confeitaria Colombo is part of it. The other option is to follow Av. Rio

Branco for a few short blocks to the **Teatro Municipal** (Municipal Theater), the **Museu Nacional de Belas Artes** (National Fine Arts Museum) and **The Biblioteca Nacional** (National Library), all at the corner of Av. República do Chile.

We'll start with the first option. Cross Av. Rio Branco and Rua São José becomes Rua Da Carioca. Several streets intersect here and all lead to a small park-like plaza. It is common to see faith healers, Bahian women selling produce and candy, and lots of lottery barkers. Shopping streets include Rua Gonçalves Dias (closed to traffic in the day), Rua Ouvidor, Rua Uruguaiana and Rua 7 de Setembro (locals refer to it as Via Sete, pronounced SECHE). Shops here sell flowers, handicrafts, music, jewelry, leather goods and clothing. The streets are crowded and the beat here is more New York than Leblon.



© Sergio Fecuri/Embratur

Filé, a traditional weaving style, is made by locals and sold at markets.

This is not an upscale shopping area, but rather for locals, and it's a great place to take in the local culture.

Stop by **Confeitaria Colombo** at Rua Gonçalves Dias 32 even if you aren't hungry. It occupies a building that is 300 years old and was the city's most important meeting place in the early days of the republic. In 1960, it became a dining spot. Ornate mirrors, Italian marble and rosewood furniture give the mezzanine, Cristovão dining room the appearance of a movie set. While Colombo's is best known for its lunch buffet, we prefer the ground-floor dining area where you can select Brazilian finger foods (shrimp encrusted with mashed potatoes and lightly fried) or mini-sandwiches and pastries. You can be served at a nearby table or take them out and enjoy them on a bench in Largo da Carioca, as many locals do. Hours: 8 am-8 pm weekdays; Sat, 10 am-5 pm; closed Sun.

In Largo da Carioca is **São Francisco da Penitência Church** and its neighbor, the **Convent of Santo Antônio**. The church was started in 1622 on land donated by Franciscan monks. The main chapel, finished in 1738, has lovely Brazilian Baroque art, including engravings and sculptures. The premier piece is the painting glorifying St. Francis of Assisi on the ceiling of the central nave. There are catacombs beneath the church and a peaceful patio-garden. Hours: Tue.-Fri., 9 am-noon, 1-4 pm. No masses are held here at this writing.

The convent took virtually the entire 18th century to complete and it too houses works of art, particularly wood carvings. Hours: Mon.-Fri., 2-5 pm.

A short stroll west along Rua da Carioca, **Praça Tiradentes** has an equestrian statue of a hero in the drive to make Brazil a republic. Tiradentes (Toothpuller) did not live to see his dream come to reality. Also in this area is the tram station for Santa Teresa and Rio's cathedral, which looks like an inverted pyramid, named **Catedral Metropolitana de São Sebastião**.

Catedral Metropolitana de São Sebastião.

In 1676, the diocese of Rio was created and the parish church São Sebastião do Morro do Castilo was selected as its cathedral. But it turned out to be too small and the diocese selected the present site, leveling a fort to make way for the current cathedral, which can seat 20,000 people. It was built in the

Pope John Paul II celebrated mass here.

shape of a truncated pyramid and has 48 bronze plates on the main doors that explore the meaning of faith. The chandeliers are massive and there are sculptures and murals throughout. In the basement is the **Museum of Sacred Art**, which features the throne of Emperor Dom Pedro II as well as basins used in royal christenings. The archives here are open to the public on Tues. and Thurs, 2 pm-6 pm. Cathedral hours: 7 am-7 pm. Av. República do Chile 245. ☎ (21) 2240-2669.

Follow Av. 13 de Maio (13th of May) to Praça Floriano, where you'll find the **Municipal Theatre**. If it looks familiar, it may be because it was modeled after the Paris Opera House. The Municipal Theater is home to its own ballet company and orchestra, and it maintains a full schedule of performances, including operas, concerts, plays and ballets. It hosts visiting artists and companies from abroad. Check schedules at www.

Credit: Roberto Tietzmann

View from the theater's staircase

theatromunicpal.rj.gov.br. Regularly scheduled tours include a small museum with memorabilia from such diverse artists as Caruso and Carmen Miranda. ☎ (21) 2299-1711.

The **National Museum of Fine Arts** is directly across Av. Rio Branco from the theater. Originally created by the royal family in 1808, this building was inaugurated as a museum in 1937. Today, it houses over 14,000 works by Brazilian artists from the 17th through 20th centuries. There are also pieces from well-known foreign artists, such as Monet, Goya and El Greco. The museum features an impressive collection of Brazilian folk art, as well as African pieces. There is a large library, too. Av. Rio Branco 199. Hours: Tues-Fri, 10 am-6 pm, Sat-Sun, 2-6 pm. Entry fee. ☎ (21) 2240-0068. www.mnba.gov.br.

Nearby at Av. Rio Branco 219, the **National Library** occupies an interesting building that is over 100 years old. This is the largest and most important library in the country, featuring an impressive collection of rare and ancient manuscripts, maps and books, including rare bibles. Literature says it houses over three million volumes. We believe it. Hours: Mon-Fri, 11 am-4 pm, Sat, 9 am-3 pm. ☎ (21) 2262-8255.

NOTE: The Municipal Theater, Museum of Fine Arts and the National Library are in the section of downtown known as Cinelândia. There are many movie theaters and inexpensive eateries nearby.

Sidetrip to Fiscal Island

Ilha Fiscal is visible from the waterfront near Praça Quinze. The Navy schooner, *Nogueira da Gama*, acts as a ferry (nominal fee) and leaves from Av. Alfredo Agache dock there. On a small island in the bay near Praça Quinze you'll see an elegant green-hued palace. Designed in neo-Gothic style in 1881, it was not inaugurated till 1889, just before the royal family fled the country. The only event held in the palace was the family's departure ball. Years later, the building is a cultural center with historical and interactive exhibits. Even more interesting are the mosaic floors, stained glass windows and carved stonework that incorporate symbols of the Brazilian Empire. Don't miss the largest clock in the Empire. Ferries leave Thurs-Sun, at 1 pm, 2:30 pm, 4 pm. The ferry does not operate on national holidays. ☎ (21) 2104-6992.

SIGHTSEEING

Santa Teresa

For a change of pace and a very different Rio experience, head to Santa Teresa, one of the city's oldest and most charming neighborhoods. This hilly area, inland from Flamengo Park, offers impressive views of the bay and city from many parts of the district. Its narrow streets are lined with small one-family houses, many with well-tended gardens. Some have been renovated and you'll see artist's studios and workshops. On Sundays,

Colorful homes are built on Santa Teresa's hilly location.

artists display and sell their works on the street. Handicraft stores and charming cafés can be found on Rua Almirante Alexandrino next to the local produce market. There are no "must see" spots here, so just stroll around absorbing the local color.

When you tire of strolling, head to Rua Murtinho Nobre. At #163, you'll find the **Parque de Ruinas** (Park of Ruins, although the ruins are long gone). The park envelopes the stunning residence of Laurinda Santos Lobo, who was in charge of many of Rio's cultural activities early in the 20th century. The building has aspects of Neoclassical, Greek and Gothic architecture and is a cultural center and exhibition hall. There is a coffee shop and a viewing tower atop the building. Sip a strong black coffee as you look out over the city to Niterói and Tijuca Forest. The park that surrounds the center has an open-air stage where concerts are held. Check with your concierge to see what exhibits or shows are on when you are in Rio.

Follow the pathway from the park to **Museu Chácara de Céu** (Heavenly Farm Museum) at #93, formerly the residence of a wealthy Carioca businessman and avid art collector. There are works by Picasso, Dali, Miro and

Matisse, as well as scores of watercolors and drawings. Look for the collection of antique maps from the 17th and 18th centuries. The mansion was built in the 1950s and the furnishings remain from that era. The gardens were designed by Roberto Burle Marx.

Cultural Center/Museum hours: Wed-Mon, noon-5 pm. ☎ (21) 2507-1932. Small entrance fee.

You can go to Santa Teresa by taxi and even by bus (numbers 206 and 214 from Rua da Carioca, downtown), but the best way to get there is on a *bonde* (tram) in Largo da Carioca. This is the city's only train line still in service. It is a delightful ride, particularly as the *bonde* transverses the Lapa Aqueduct.

LAPA AQUEDUCT HISTORY

The aqueduct was built in 1724 using Indian and slave labor. Modeled after one in Lisbon, it has 42 Roman-style double arches made of bricks. When it was built, it carried water from the springs in the hills of Santa Teresa to Carioca Square, where slaves collected it for household use. The aqueduct functioned for over 100 years until the end of the 19th century, when it was converted to a viaduct for trams.

Getting There: *Bondes* leave from a small terminal on Rua Prof. Lelio Gama (near Largo da Carioca) every 15 minutes. Your best bet is to go on Saturday at 10 am, when the trip is narrated by a guide from the Tram Mu-

seum (the tram makes a stop at the museum en route). ☎ (21) 2242-2354 to reserve.

You can combine a visit to Santa Teresa with other sights on a **Jeep Tour**. ☎ (21) 2589-0883, www.jeeptour.com.br.

Restaurants in Santa Teresa

Reservations are a must at Aprazível!

Aprazível on Rua Aprazível is high above the heart of the district, hidden behind a flower-covered wall. There is seating in the rustic main building and at several dining areas scattered through the garden. All have sensational views. The menu features foods from the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais.

Lunch served Thurs-Sun only. Dinner served nightly. Expensive. ☎ (21) 2508-9174.

Marcó and **Sobrenatural** are neighbors on Rua Almirante Alexandrino. They are both casual eateries featuring typical Brazilian fare. Marcó's specialty is *feijoada*, while Sobrenatural features octopus, squid and *moquecas* (seafood stew). No reservations. Great views. Inexpensive.

WARNING: It is best to wander through Santa Teresa during daylight hours. If you want to eat dinner here or attend a concert, take taxis. Don't ride the tram at night and don't carry valuables even in the daytime. Trams move slowly, allowing mobile thieves to jump on and off. It doesn't happen often anymore, but be cautious.

MUSEUMS

When you think of Rio, museums probably don't jump to mind. But you'll be pleasantly surprised to find that the city has a great many museums. True, Brazil does not have works by the great masters of Europe and many of the finest classical works are in churches and convents. The best art museums here are those displaying contemporary art and there are two (one is in Niterói). The Primitive Art Museum is outstanding as well. Other museums focus on aspects of Brazilian life such as Indian culture, precious gems and Carmen Miranda.

Almost all museums are closed on Mon.

Here are some museums we think you'll enjoy.

Modern Art Museum

Inaugurated in 1958 in its present location in Flamengo Park, the Museu de Arte Moderna (MAM) was destroyed by a fire in the 1970s. Much of the money to rebuild came from donations by Brazilians and art lovers from all over the world. The present building, designed by Affonso Eduardo Reidy and set in gardens designed by Roberto Burle Marx, is striking. Its permanent collection includes paintings, sculptures and drawings by Brazilian and foreign artists, including Picasso and Miró. If you are lucky, you might catch a temporary exhibit on loan from a museum elsewhere. There are two libraries here, one focussing on art books, while the other features books about movies. Screenings are held on a regular schedule.

Hours: Tues-Fri, noon-6 pm; Sat-Sun, noon-7 pm. Small entrance fee. Av. Infante D. Henrique 85, Flamengo Park. ☎ (21) 2240-4944, www.mamrio.com.br.

Contemporary Art Museum

UFO spotters will be convinced they've seen a huge one when they glance across Guanabara Bay towards Niterói. Most people agree that the Museu de Arte Contemporanea (MAC) looks like a flying saucer, especially at night when it is illuminated and seems to be hovering above ground. Oscar Niemeyer himself said that it stood over the Boa Viagem promontory "like a flower." Still others think it looks like an enormous sculpture. Regardless of who you talk to, there's no doubt that the museum, which opened in 1996, is stunning. Many visitors come to see the building itself, leaving the exhibits as an afterthought.

© Daniel Burnap/iStock Photo

The ethereal aspect is enhanced by a reflecting pool surrounding the base of the structure. A curving red concrete ramp leads to the museum entrances. Carioca friends reminded us to watch Sugar Loaf Mountain as we climbed the ramp. At one point, the building and the mountain overlap, as per Niemeyer's vision.

The main exhibit halls are on the second floor, as is the verandah that encircles the museum, offering 360-degree views of the bay and Niterói. A permanent collection features works by Brazilian artists, but the rotating exhibits are even more interesting. The museum offers guided tours in a variety of languages. You need to reserve for these.

Hours: Tues-Sun, 11 am-7 pm. Entrance fee. Mirante de Boa Viagem, Niterói. ☎ (21) 2620-2400.

You can reach Niterói by ferry from the docks near Praça Quinze Novembro or by car (taxi) across the Niterói Bridge.

H. Stern Museum

Yes Virginia, there is an H. Stern and he is alive and well in Ipanema, where the world headquarters of his international jewelry firm is located. Over 90% of the world's colored stones are found in Brazil and H. Stern's gems have won awards in many international competitions. The biggest attrac-

Opp: H. Stern Headquarters © H. Stern

tion in the museum is the collection of tourmalines that Mr. Stern has personally collected over the 50 years he's been in business. Most tourmalines are green, but this collection has over 1,000 stones in a variety of shades. Another facet of the museum is the step-by-step process of turning what seems to be a plain rock into a polished stone. The process continues as a setting is designed to complement each stone. Each is unique. You'll come away with a whole new appreciation of why jewels are called precious.

Hours: Mon-Fri, 8:30 am-4:30 pm; Sat, 8:30-2 pm. H. Stern, Rua d'Ávila 113, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2259-7442.

Carmen Miranda Museum

Although Cariocas were somewhat dismayed that Carmen Miranda was the public face of Brazil in scores of movies in the 1940s, there was no doubting her appeal. Certainly, no Carioca wore the enormous platform shoes and turban-style hats embellished by a variety of fruits (she was quite short). Today, however her costumes, jewelry, photos and memorabilia draw as many Brazilians as visitors.

Hours: Tues-Fri, 10 am-5 pm; Sat-Sun, noon-5 pm. Free. 560 Avenida Rui Barbosa,

Parque Brigadeiro Eduardo Gomes (Flamengo Park). ☎ (21) 2551-2597.

Museum of Naïve (Primitive) Art, MIAN

"Naïve" or "Primitive" as used here does not refer to the Stone Age, but rather to folk art. Grandma Moses is perhaps the best-known American primitive artist. Set in an attractive mansion, only a block from the Corcovado train station, this museum has over 8,000 paintings by artists from all over Brazil and from 130 other countries. Some pieces date to the 15th century and each century thereafter is represented. Look for the special exhibit – a huge canvas that depicts the city of Rio.

Colorful and intricate, the paintings represent a historical and cultural time-line, depicting life of the common man in each era. The museum is privately owned by Lucien Finkelstein, whose foundation administers the museum.

Hours: Tues-Fri, 10 am-6 pm; Sat-Sun, noon-6 pm. Rua Cosme Velho 561. ☎ (21) 2205-8612.

TIP: Take some time to stroll to #822 on Rua Cosme Velho, where a small plaza looks like a recreated colonial street. It's authentic! Seven homes with colonial roofs and façades, cobblestoned sidewalks and trees that have stood here for centuries. It's named **Boticário Plaza** for the Imperial Family's apothecary who lived here.

Indian Museum

It is believed that there were over one million Indians in Brazil when the Portuguese arrived. Whether through intermarriage or illness, the Indian culture was absorbed and all but lost. So Museu do Indios, a scientific and cultural arm of the National Indian Foundation (Funai), is particularly important. Its collection of artifacts is one of the few on the continent linked to the indigenous peoples of South America. Housed in a building dating back to 1880 and typical of the townhouses surrounding it in Botafogo, the permanent collection uses a variety of media to bring indigenous cultures alive. There are everyday objects, texts, documents and studies by local and foreign anthropologists in the Marechal Rondon Library. Among the items on display are utensils made of wood, straw, clay and feathers, musical instruments, hunting and fishing implements, amulets and more – over 14,000 pieces in total. Additionally, there are photos, films, video tapes and sound recordings. The garden areas have life-sized displays of indigenous environments built by members of the Xavantes tribe (Mato Grosso) and the Wajápi tribe (Amazon). These exhibits change; on a previous visit we saw a Guaraní village. One thing that is amazing is the size of the collection, particularly since it was not started till the 1940s.

Hours: Tues-Fri, 9 am-5:30 pm; Sat-Sun, 1-5 pm. Rua das Palmeiras 55, Botafogo. ☎ (21) 2286-8899.

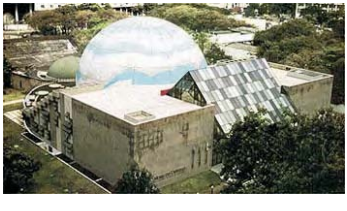
Pontal House Folk-Art Museum

For another glimpse of Brazilian folklore, head to the Museu Casa do Pontal in a farmlike setting near Recreio dos Bandeirantes, one of the city's stunning beach areas. The artwork here is made of clay and depicts Brazilians at work and play. There are over 5,000 pieces, representing the work of more than 200 Brazilian artists. A typical piece shows a group of men playing dominoes, smoking cigars. The figures are incredibly detailed. Daily life, festivals, rituals, traditions and customs are portrayed. There are a small number of pieces in wood and metal. The artwork here was collected by a French designer over a 40-year period. The museum is set in his summer residence, about 45 minutes from Copacabana. Until very recently, this area was virtually undeveloped.

Hours: Tues-Sun, 9:30 am-5 pm. Estrada do Pontal 3295, Recreio dos Bandeirantes. ☎ (21) 2490-4013.

Planetarium & Universe Museum

Rio's planetarium (Planetário) was dated and uninviting until it was totally remodeled in the 1970s. It now has two operating domes with different shows in each. The **Carl Zeiss theater** has 227 seats and can project over 9,000 stars,



showing the major ones in their appropriate colors. The smaller **Galileo Galilei theater** seats 130 and can project over 6,000 stars. This is the place to see the southern sky and the constellations. It is amazing how different they are. You can also see the Southern Cross, which is not visible from the northern hemisphere.

Shows are scheduled on Sat, Sun and holidays at 4 pm, 5:30 pm and 7 pm. Check schedules and topics with your concierge.

The **Universe Museum** (Museu do Universo), a new addition to the complex, is noted for **Telescope's Square** (Praça dos Telescópios), where visitors can stargaze through telescopes without seeing the shows. The telescopes automatically find about 64,000 objects. Free service.

Hours: Tues, Weds, Thurs, 6:30 pm-8:30 pm.

The library here specializes in astronomy, physics and astrophysics. It is open Mon-Fri, 10 am-5 pm. Restaurant and parking. Rua Vice-Governador Rubens Berardo 100, Gávea. ☎ (21) 2274-0096.

Copacabana Fort & Army History Museum

Truthfully, there are scores of museums more interesting than the Museu Histórico do Exército e Forte de Copacabana, but we've included it to encourage you to visit the fort, whose setting is incomparable. Additionally, you'll find it hard to resist a cup of coffee or a

caipirinha at the new **Colombo Café** on the fort grounds.

Built in 1914 to strengthen the defenses of Guanabara Bay prior to WW I, the fort sits on a promontory that juts into the bay. It also separates Copacabana Beach from Arpoador Beach. You can't miss the whitewashed building as you walk westward on Avenida Atlântica. The entrance, through a guarded gate, leads to a grassy promenade where highly polished cannons are kept in tip-top shape. The view of Guanabara Bay and Copacabana are stunning, especially at dusk. The small museum traces the history of Brazil's army from colonial times through the present using a variety of media.

Museum hours: Tues-Sat, 10 am-4 pm. The Café is closed on Sun. Entrance: Praça Coronel Eugenio Franco, Posto 6, Copacabana. ☎ (21) 287-2192 (fort); ☎ (21) 3201-4049 (café).

Natural History Museum

The impressive Museu Histórico Nacional was created in 1922 on the site of an old fort on Calaboose Point. It is now housed in three adjacent buildings, each built in a different era as the collection grew. If you are thinking stuffed animals, think again. The permanent collections include the largest numismatic exhibit in South America, an armament and cannon collection as well as exhibits of coaches and other means of transport through the ages.

Hours: Tues-Fri, 10 am-5:30pm; Sat-Sun, 2-6 pm. Entry fee. Praça Marechal Áncora (near Praça Quinze).

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Local artists display their wares at Rio's street fairs.

STREET FAIRS

Street fairs (*feiras*) are very popular in Rio as illustrated by the fact that there are so many of them and that devotees come from all walks of life. The vast majority are called **free fairs**, which refers to the fact that they change locations and not to an entrance fee. They are huge, taking up entire squares and the streets surrounding them. They are primarily produce markets selling the freshest fruits and vegetables available in the city. They also sell spices and kitchen tools. Of more interest to visitors are the **cultural fairs**, where you can buy original works of art, handmade jewelry and handicrafts, and **antique fairs** that sell anything from crystal to carpets. A recent phenomenon is the fair that sells both goods and entertainment. It's both a shopping opportunity and an event.

Here are some standout fairs you might enjoy.

The Hippie Fair

Until the early 1960s, Praça General Osório in Ipanema was a quiet place where locals met to read newspapers, drink coffee and trade gossip. Then a few neighborhood artists began to display their work in a corner of the square on Sundays. The rest is history. Artists and craftsmen from all over the city arrived and the Feira Hippie became a destination. The artists are not hippies in the American bohemian sense. Things you can find here are constantly changing, but Brazilian handicrafts are most popular, with

primitive paintings and colorful ceramics best sellers. Leathers belts, bags and sandals are also good buys. Handmade jewelry in original designs is usually inexpensive. Often, Indians from the Amazon join the crowd to display their unique handicrafts. Bargaining is expected.

The Hippie Fair is sometimes called Feirarte I.

Hours: Daily, 9 am-6 pm, year-round. Praça General Osório at R. Visconde de Pirajá, Ipanema.

Northeastern Fair

When you're hot, you're hot, and the Feira Nordestina has been hot for the last decade. It has grown from a Sunday morning fair to a two-day event that attracts Cariocas from all over the city. It is huge, with over 650 stalls spread over streets, squares and avenues that are named for streets and cities in Brazil's northeastern provinces. The stalls sell foods and crafts from that region, as well as housewares and clothing – all at discounted prices. In among the fair are two stages where events take place – they include cooking demonstrations (in Portuguese), music and dancing. On Saturday and Sunday evenings, two bands usually take to the stage around 8 pm.

Handmade crafts © Christian Knepper/Embratur

Hours: Sat-Sun, 10 am-10 pm, year-round. Campo de São Cristovão, São Cristovão. ☎ (21) 2580-0501.

Plaza Fifteenth of November Fair

Feirarte Praça Quinze is often called Feirarte II.

The smaller, more traditional flea-market style Feirarte Praça Quinze is held in the plaza surrounded by historic buildings. You never know what to expect, but there are leather goods, carved woods, glass and silver. Some stalls sell typical foods, or you can opt for one of the other small dining options under the nearby Teles Arch on Travessa do Comércio.

Hours: Thurs-Fri, 8 am-6 pm. Praça Quinze de Novembro, downtown.

Babilonia Hype Fair

The Babilonia Feira Hype started in the 1990s. It is unique both for the wares it offers and its location. Over 200 vendors sell chic resort clothing, fashionable beach wear, jewelry, fashion and decorative accessories at small stalls set in the paddock of the Jockey Club (Racetrack). Here too, the clothing is only part of the experience. Entertainment includes musical and dance performances and there is a bar. This fair tends to draw a young crowd. There is a small entry fee.

Hours: Sat-Sun, 2 pm-10 pm. Jockey Club, Jardim Botânico 971, Gávea. ☎ (21) 2267-0066.

Cassino Antiques Fair

Antiques are displayed in stalls on all three floors of the Cassino Atlántico Shopping Center. Blown glass, antique jewelry, crystal and ivory are on display in an air-conditioned setting with tea service and classical music.

Hours: Sat, 11 am-7 pm. Cassino Atlántico Shopping Center, Ave. Atlântica 4240, Copacabana.

San Sebastian Antiques Fair

Art Nouveau and Art Deco items, porcelain, silver and rugs are sold at Feira de Antiquário São Sebastião, set up near the Market Tower that houses the Albamar Restaurant. In a classy move, the restaurant allows visitors to view the bay from its tower even if they aren't customers.

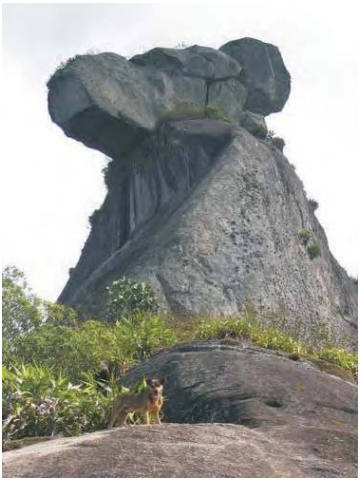
Hours: Sat, 9 am-5 pm. Praça Marechal Áncora at Praça Quinze de Novembro, downtown.

PARKS & GARDENS

Tijuca Forest & National Park

It is rare for a national park to have an urban setting and that's what makes Parque Nacional da Tijuca unusual, since it is only 15 miles from the center of Rio. It covers almost 8,000 acres and has within it eight different forest areas, Corcovado Mountain, scores of waterfalls, grottos, chapels, historic points and well-marked hiking trails. There

are hundreds of species of flora and fauna, all typical of an Atlantic rain forest and many of them endangered. The park, which was created in 1961, is dense, but roads within it are well paved and lead to a variety of sights. Its most mountainous part is called **Alto da Boa Vista**. The highest point of the paved road, **Largo do Bom Retiro**, has an information center with an assortment of maps showing the hiking trails that lead to Tijuca Peak and Papagáio Peak, highest in the park. They are signposted.

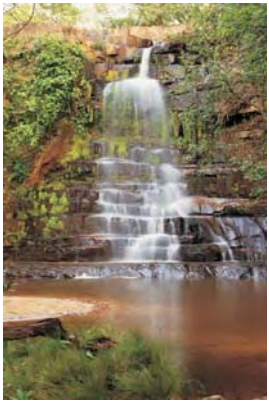


Papagáio Peak

WARNING: We cannot stress strongly enough that it can be dangerous to hike in Tijuca Forest on your own. It is a huge park and there are those who'd like to relieve you of any valuables you were foolish enough to bring with you. We suggest eco-tour operators that specialize in Tijuca hikes on page 148.

The most important part of the park for visitors is **Tijuca Forest**, home to Corcovado Mountain, beautiful viewing points and a stunning waterfall. If you drive, enter the

park at Praça Alfonso Visen and follow the paved road. At 1,300 feet, **Vista Chinesa** (Chinese View) observation point is marked by a green pagoda with fearsome dragon heads. (In the early 19th century, Chinese immigrants worked on a tea plantation nearby.) Stop here for great views of Corcovado, Ipanema, Leblon and south zone beaches.



© Peixes/Embratur

The forest has many waterfalls.

Mesa do Imperador (Emperor's Table) is the next stop, 200 feet higher and with different views. The name came from Emperor Dom Pedro I, whose family picnicked here to escape the heat of the city below. Here too you'll find **Mayrink Chapel**, which was part of a coffee plantation in the 16th century. It has murals by a well-known Brazilian artist, Candido Portinari. Follow signs to the **Taunay Waterfalls**, which drop 500 feet. It's a cool and lovely spot for a picnic.

If you continue to climb into the park, you'll reach the parking area for the Christ The Redeemer statue. (See *Corcovado Mountain*, pages 91-94, for details on visiting this site.)

See page 148 for names of groups that lead hikes in the park.

Flamengo Park

Although the official name of this park is Brigadeiro Eduardo Gomes Park, it is called Flamengo Park by one and all, simply because it is in the Flamengo section of the city. This was once a narrow sand strip and little else, but a sweeping reclamation project begun in the 1960s added three miles of greenery and over 13,000 trees. Well-tended grassy areas are complemented with stunning gardens designed by Roberto Burle Marx. The park follows the curve of Guanabara Bay from Santos Dumont Airport (local flights) to the Glória Marina. It houses the Museum of Modern Art, the Carmen Miranda Museum, the National War Memorial and Military Museum, monuments, a skating rink, children's playground, tennis and basketball courts and soccer and volleyball courts. A great view of Sugar Loaf and the Bay forms the backdrop.

We detailed the Museum of Modern Art and the Carmen Miranda Museum in the *Museums* section (pages 112 & 116, respectively), so we'll start at the **National War Memorial**. It is instantly recognizable by the three statues of military officers, each representing one branch of the service, along with modern twin towers supporting a round vessel. At the base in an underground crypt are the graves of Brazil's unknown soldiers, as well as the burial site of hundreds of WWII dead. The caskets were shipped here from Italy in 1956 and reinterred. Brazilians, by nature a fun-loving, peaceful people, fought bravely with the Allies in North Africa and Europe. Nearby

is a small military museum with World War II memorabilia, including Nazi weapons.

> **TIP:** If you are in Rio on the first Sunday of the month, come to see the changing of the guard ceremony here. Lots of pomp and pageantry.

You can walk into Flamengo Park from downtown Rio. The two-lane road that leads from downtown Rio to the beaches along Flamengo Park is closed to traffic on Sun, 7 am-6 pm.

Lagoon Rodrigo de Freitas

Heart-shaped Lagoa (lagoon) is linked to the sea by the Jardim de Alah canal, which separates Ipanema from Leblon. You can't ask for a more beautiful or peaceful setting in a park area, which may sound strange since Lagoa sits in the center of the city and is encircled by upscale high-rise residences, embassies, private clubs, restaurants and a two-lane roadway. But somehow, the city fades away and your focus switches to the shimmering water and sports options in the six miles of parkland.

Courtesy H. Stern

Sunset over the lagoon

Named for a nobleman who owned a sugar mill here at the end of the 16th century, the area was virtually untouched until the 1970s when the park and recreational areas were developed. You can jog or bicycle around the entire six miles. There are four distinct park areas, the newest of which, finished in 1995, is **Park Tom Jobim** (named for the singer/songwriter). It has many sports fields and a large playground. You can also rent rowboats and paddle boats.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Perimeter of Rodrigo Freitas Lagoon

The lagoon is reached by two main streets. Av. Borges de Medeiros, from Leblon, circles Lagoa on the western shore, while Av. Epitácio Pessoa from Ipanema circles the southern and eastern shores. Special areas on the eastern shore include a skateboard center, multi-sport courts and tennis courts. There is a heliport and a sculpture garden. The Rowing Stadium is also here. Notable areas on the western shore include the Skate Park, which has roller skating rink, soccer

pitch and amphitheater. If you like roller hockey, head to Park Cantagalo.

The area is dotted with benches, playgrounds and bathrooms. The 23 kiosks serve as social centers as well as dining spots.

STANDOUT KIOSKS

- #2 – Brazilian food
- #6 – sushi
- #7 – Arab food and jazz music
- #11 – Italian food and music
- #23 – pizza with pop and rock music

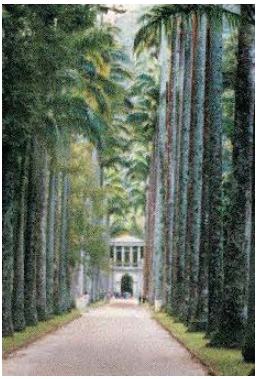
Taxi drivers can drop you near specific sports fields and kiosks. There is also parking for those who drive.

CHRISTMAS TREAT

In December a towering metallic Christmas tree floats in the Lagoa. It is as high as a 27-story building and is lit by 800,000 lights that form different designs as the tree rotates. The tree is anchored near the skating park, but visible from anywhere around the perimeter.

Botanical Gardens

The Jardim Botânico were established in June 1808 by the ruling prince Dom João, who later became emperor. He established the gardens at an old sugarcane factory with plants that were a gift from a wealthy Frenchman.



One of the first things planted were the Imperial palm trees that still line the road from the main entrance. The grounds have not changed much over the years and many retain bronze statues, fountains and historical buildings. What has changed dramatically are the number of species on view. The 340 acres have 7,200 species plus over 5,000 trees and shrubs. There is a medicinal plants section as well as Japanese Gardens. In one section plants are carefully nurtured – among them brazilwood and yellow-guana – to prevent them from becoming extinct.

My personal favorites in the botanical gardens are the Queen Victoria water lilies that were brought here from the Amazon and now grow in the lake. The lily is the world's largest and, when in bloom, is quite a sight. The Orchidarium has over 3,000 specimens of 600 species, some of which are of rare size or historic value. The Kuhlmann Botanical Museum's collection of dried plants is fascinating.

FOR PLANT LOVERS

If gardens and plants interest you, consider a visit to the **Roberto Burle Marx Country House**. Marx, a prominent landscape designer who created Copacabana's mosaic streets and Flamengo Park's garden areas, left his house to the city of Rio. Included are gardens, works of art and a library. There are thousands of plants and many rare species. Visits by appointment only. Guided tours at 9:30 am and 1:30 pm daily. Estrada Roberto Burle Marx, 2019, Barra de Guaratiba. ☎ (21) 2410-1412, x 226.

Hours: Daily, 8 am-5 pm. Rua Jardim Botânico, 920/1008, Jardim Botânico. ☎ (21) 2294-9349. Entrance fee.

There is a parking area at the main gate to the gardens.

Zoological Gardens

While the Jardim Zoológico (RIO-ZOO) is not as impressive as the San Diego Zoo, it is an interesting place to visit because it is home to over 2,000 animals, many of them unknown, or certainly little known, in North American zoos. The Amazon

Zoo entrance

Forest section houses mammals, reptiles and birds that are rarely exhibited elsewhere. A covered bridge leads to a vast expanse where animals are shown in their natural environment, and there is a special place for aquatic mammals and another for waterbirds. The zoo aquarium holds Brazilian river fish.

The zoo is worth a visit, especially if you are with children.

Hours: Tues-Sun, 9 am-4:30 pm. Quinta da Boa Vista, São Cristovão. ☎ (21) 3523-8400.

Quinta da Boa Vista is a huge park and the zoo is only a small part of it. Once the home of the Brazilian royal family, it has lovely gardens connected by footbridges, waterfalls and even a lake. Also here is São Cristovão Imperial Palace, where both Dom Pedro II and his daughter, Princess Isabel, were born. The palace now houses the National Museum, which has eclectic exhibits ranging from Egyptian mummies to stuffed animals. Hours: Tues-Sun, 10 am-4 pm.

THEME PARKS

Traveling with children? Still a child yourself? Consider visiting one of Rio's theme parks.

Rio Water Planet

This huge park is surrounded by forests and mountains. It has toboggans and falls, river rafting and a large water playground. In all, there are over 30 attractions.

Hours: Sat, Sun and holidays, 10 am-5 pm. Estrada do Bandeirantes, Vargem Grande. ☎ (21) 2428-9000.

Terra Encantada Park

A typical amusement park, Terra Encantada has roller coasters, a flying merry-go-round and a Brazilian version of crazy cups, the famous Disney ride.

Hours: Thurs-Sat, 2-9 pm; Sun & holidays, noon-9 pm. Av. Ayrton Senna 2800, Barra da Tijuca. ☎ (21) 2421-9444.

Children's Town

This park is not within the city limits and you'll need a car to get here. It is divided into "cultural," "sports" and "country" sections, with cable-cars, puppet shows, climbing walls, skateboard tracks, paddle boats and horseback and chariot riding.

Hours: Tues-Sun, 7 am-6 pm. Km 1, Highway 101 (Rio Santos – Santa Cruz). A taxi will be prohibitively expensive.

ACTIVE SPORTS

With good weather year-round Cariocas get their exercise on the beaches, in the parks and on marked trails. Soccer and volleyball are played on virtually every beach and in most parks. The parks around the Lagoa are active sports centers too. You can join in.

Beach Volleyball

First started in Rio, beach volleyball is now an Olympic sport, and you can watch games or join in at the following locations.

- **Copacabana** – on the beach opposite the Rio Internacional Hotel
- **Ipanema** – Posto 10 – opposite Rua Garcia d'Ávila
- **Leblon** – Posto 11

Beach Soccer

- **Copacabana** – From Posto 1 (Leme) to Posto 5
- **Ipanema** – At Arpoador Beach and at Rua Farme de Amoedo

Bicycling/Jogging

Traffic lanes throughout the city are closed on Sundays to allow wider recreation lanes.

A marked bicycle lane begins at the Glória Marina in Botafogo and stretches all the way to Barra da Tijuca. It follows the beachfront as much as possible, but is not contiguous. There are also bicycle paths around the Lagoa. Joggers use the same marked paths as cyclists.

Bicycles can be rented at beachfront hotels and kiosks and at kiosks around Lagoa. Try one of the first-rate bicycles at **Special Bike**, Rua Visconde de Pirajá 135, Ipanema, ☎ (21) 2521-2685. Also, **Bike Box**, Barra Shopping, ☎ (21) 2431-9269, and in Copacabana at **Shopping Rio Sul**, ☎ (21) 2295-6648.

Tennis/Squash

Guests at the **Sheraton Rio** in Vidigal and the **Intercontinental Hotel** in São Conrado have tennis courts on property. The Intercontinental allows non-guests to play on their three courts for a fee. ☎ (21) 3323-2200 to reserve.

Rio Sports Center, Av. Ayrton Senna 2541, Barra, has six tennis courts. Three are indoors. ☎ (21) 3325-6644.

Smash Squash, Rua Couto Fernandes 210, Laranjeiras has five squash courts and one tennis court. ☎ (21) 2557-3758.

Akxe Club, Av. Canal de Marapendi, 2900, Barra has both tennis and squash courts. ☎ (21) 3325-3232.

Hiking

Tijuca Forest and **Tijuca National Park** have scores of well-marked hiking trails that lead to beautiful viewing points, waterfalls and grottos. However, hiking here on your own is not a good option. Instead, sign up with one of the terrific adventure travel tour operators.

Guides at **Rio Hiking** are biologists and photographers. They offer trips in Tijuca Forest and National Park, as well as Sugar Loaf. ☎ (21) 2552-9204, www.riohiking.com.br.

Rio Adventures runs hikes in the same locations as Rio Hiking. It also runs trekking expeditions. ☎ (21) 2705-5747, www.rioadventures.com.

See page 148 for other adventure and eco-tour operators.

Golf

Some **private clubs** open their doors to non-members. Ask your concierge to make arrangements for you; weekends can be very difficult.

You can play **minigolf** at Av. Aryton Senna 2150, Barra. It has 20 holes. Hours: Mon, noon-10 pm; Tues-Sat, 10 am-10 pm. ☎ (21) 2108-8170.

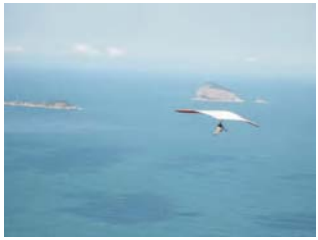
Skate Boarding

Rio has built a dozen skating venues around the city to entice people away from boarding on the sidewalks, which is frowned upon. The parks are lighted at night. Among the most popular are:

- **Parque Garota de Ipanema**, Arpoador – bowl and mini-bowl.
- **Parque do Taboas**, Lagoa (near Yacht Club of Flamengo), mini ramp.
- **Aterra do Flamengo**, Flamengo – snail and several ramps.
- **Av. Lauro Müller**, near Rio Sul Shopping Center, Botafogo. Mini ramp.

Hang-Gliding

Hang-gliders head to **Sitio Três Pedras** (Three Rocks) on Pedra Bonita, a mountain



in Tijuca National Park that over looks São Conrado Beach. It is a beautiful and safe take-off spot. In good weather, licensed pilots will be there to give instructions or dive with you (tandem flights are popular). You can make arrangements in advance.

- **Rio Tandem Fly**, ☎ (21) 2422-6371
- **Sky Center Rio**, ☎ (21) 2437-4592
- **Superfly**, ☎ (21) 3322-2286

Board Surfing

Waves in the Atlantic Ocean are ideal for surfing, making the sport very popular. Experts point to the following spots as having the sweetest waves:

- **Arpoador** – A small beach strip between Copacabana Fort and Ipanema Beach. Waves reach two meters/6½ feet high.
- **Barra-Meio** is a much longer beach strip that fronts the 3,000 block of Av. Sernambetiba in Barra da Tijuca. Championships are held here. Waves two meters/6½ feet high are common.

- **Macumba-Pontal**, **Prainha** and **Grumari** are separate beach areas along the same sand strip in Recreio dos Bandeirantes. The waves along this strip often reach three meters/10 feet – not for the faint of heart. Since these beaches are rather isolated, the sand is pristine.

Board rentals are available at **Galeria River**, Rua Francisco Otaviano 67, Arpoador. You can also buy a board here to take home.

A surf-bus stops at all the beaches from Botafogo to Recreio, covering the entire route in 1½ hours. It picks up surfers and their gear. Going west, look for bus signs one block inland from the beach.

Kite Surfing/Windsurfing

The best place in Rio for kite and windsurfing is **Barra da Tijuca Beach** near Barra do Pepe kiosk, where you can rent equipment.

Scuba Diving

Courtesy Dive Point

Coral

A few coastal islands offer good scuba (*mergulho*) options. The most popular destinations are the Archipelago of **Cagarras** and the **Tijuca Islands**. If you are serious about diving, consider a trip to far better diving spots in Rio de Janeiro State, but not the city. Among them are **Arraial do Cabo** and **Búzios** (east) and **Angra dos Reis** and **Ilha Grande** (west) of the city. The dive operators below offer both options.

- **Deep Blue**, Rua Marquês de Olinda 18, Botafogo. ☎ (21) 2553-2615.
- **Dive Point**, Av. Ataulfo de Paiva 1174, Leblon. ☎ (21) 2239-5105, www.divepoint.com.br.
- **Diver's Quest**, Rua Maria Angélica 171, Jardim Botânico. ☎ (21) 2266-4041, www.diversquest.com.br.
- **Mar do Rio**, Av. Infante Dom Henrique, Glória Marina. ☎ (21) 2225-7508, www.mardorio.com.br.

Jet Skiing/Parasailing

Wake In Rio, in Lagoa, runs a Jet Skiing and parasailing business. ☎ (21) 9961-0817.

Rafting

There are no rivers to raft in the city, but there are several nearby in the state of Rio de Janeiro. They include rivers in Três Rios, Angra dos Reis and Piraí. Contact **Rafter & Cia**, ☎ (24) 2255-2085, or **Mambo Jungle**, ☎ (24) 3769-2371.

Deep Sea Fishing

Half-day and full-day fishing trips are available from these operators:

- **Tropical Cruises Brasil**, Recreio dos Bandeirantes ☎ (21) 2487-1687
- **Universidade da Pesca**, Rua Mexico, Downtown, ☎ (21) 2240-8117

Sailing/Boat Rentals

You can rent a sailboat or speedboat for a day.

- **Orion Yachts** – Iate Clube do Rio, Av. Pasteur, Urca. ☎ (21) 2295-8579
- **Saveiros Tours** – Marina of Glória. ☎ (21) 2225-6064

- **Tropical Cruises Brasil** – Recreio dos Bandeirantes. ☎ (21) 2487-1687

SPECTATOR SPORTS

Futebol

Futebol (pronounced foot-chee-boll), called soccer in the US, is the world's most popular sport. In Brazil, it is the national passion. It is played by young and old on virtually every beach and park in cities throughout the country. Competition, which even in beach pick-up games is fierce, reaches a fever pitch when the game is played on a professional level. Professionals play for teams from different parts of the country and the finest often play for European teams. The best matches, including international ones, are played at **Maracaná Stadium** in the São Cristovão section of the city. It is the largest stadium in the world, seating over 100,000 spectators. The stadium was built for the

Courtesy H. Stern

World Cup in 1950 and, although Brazil lost that year, it won eight years later led by Pelé, one of the sport's most famous players. Matches are often played on Wednesday evenings and Saturday and Sunday afternoons, but there is no weekly schedule. Ask your concierge to check the schedule and, if you decide, secure tickets. Rua Prof. Eurico Rabela and Av. Maracanã, Maracanã/São Cristovão. ☎ (21) 2568-9962, www.suderrj.rj.gov.br (advance schedules).

Horse Racing

Jóquei Clube Brasileiro (the Jockey Club) has a lovely setting in Gávea where it meets Lagoa and Jardim Botânico. More than a place where races are run, the club was started by prominent members of Brazilian society and it remains a social center for the rich and famous. The most important race is the **Brazilian Grand Prix**. The racing schedule includes competition on Mon nights at 7 pm, Fri afternoon at 4 pm and Sat and Sun at 2 pm. The club's **Photochart Restaurant** is open for lunch and dinner, and there are other food and drink options too. Check schedules. Praça Santos Dumont 31, Gávea. ☎ (21) 2239-1596 (restaurant), ☎ (21) 2512-9988 (track).

NOTE: The Babilonia Fair is held in the paddock at the track on weekends. See *Sun-up to Sundown.*

TOURS

City Tours

Rio is a vast city that can be difficult to explore. A city tour is often a good way to orient yourself. Check with your hotel concierge. Many hotels have standing arrangements with a specific agency, while others can recommend a particular company that meets your needs. City tours are the standard bus or mini-van ride through the beach areas and downtown, but if you don't want to spend a day or half-day on a bus, try the companies below:

- **Jeep Tour**, ☎ (21) 2108-5800, www.jeeptour.com.br.
- **Private Tours**, ☎ (21) 2232-9710, www.privatetours.com.br.
- **Rio Adventures**, ☎ (21) 2705-5747, www.rioadventures.com.
- **Rio By Jeep**, ☎ (21) 2575-8626, www.riobyjeep.com.
- **Roteiros Culturais**, ☎ (21) 9911-3829. Guided tours to cultural sites by a professor of Art History.
- **Novos Rumos**, ☎ (21) 2247-7814. Cultural sites, plays, concerts and historic stops.
- **Favela Tour**, ☎ (21) 3322-2727, www.favelatour.com.br.

Many companies (notably Favela Tour) include *favelas* (shanty towns) in their excursions, including some of those above.

Favelas are part of Rio and Brazilian society and visitors should be aware that they exist. But to gawk at the city's poor from a bus is not what we think travel is about. Others disagree and feel a *favela* visit is essential to understanding Rio. If you decide to go, make certain that you join a tour. Do not wander in on your own.

Adventure & Ecological Tours

The tour operators below offer specialized, guided trips that may include hiking, trekking, horseback riding, scuba diving, rafting and rappelling. Their websites give the most current descriptions of services they offer. It's best to reserve these trips in advance.

- **Indiana Jungle Tours**, ☎ (21) 2484-2279, www.indianajungle.com.br
- **Klick Rio Turismo e Aventura**, ☎ (21) 2255-2257, www.klickrio.com.br
- **Rio Adventures**, ☎ (21) 2705-5747, www.rioadventures.com
- **São Conrado Eco-Aventura**, ☎ (21) 2522-5586, www.guia4ventos.com.br
- **Trilharte Ecoturismo**, ☎ (21) 2556-3848, www.trilharte.com.br
- **Hoca Tour – Tours Off-Road**, ☎ (21) 9322-0870

Flightseeing

Cruzeiro Taxi Aéreo runs flights over the city from 8 am-7 pm daily. Av. Ayrton Senna, Aeroporto de Jacarepaguá, Barra da Tijuca. ☎ (21) 3325-6500, www.cruzeirotaxiaero.com.br.

Helisight/Helisul is a much larger company that has heliports at various points around the city including the Lagoa, Praça Máua (cruise ship dock, downtown) and on Urca Hill, near Sugar Loaf. Daily, 9 am-8 pm. Rua Conde de Bernadotte 26, Leblon. ☎ (21) 2259-6995, www.helisight.com.br.

Special Events

CARNAVAL

© Rudy Huhold/Embratur

Carnaval is a pre-Lenten holiday celebrated all over Latin America, the Caribbean and in New Orleans, where it is called Mardi Gras. But nowhere is the pitch quite as pure, nor

the beat quite as powerful, as in Rio. Carnaval simply consumes the city for the five days before Ash Wednesday. Celebrants seem determined to have a blow-out party before the deprivation of Lent. But Carnaval atmosphere actually starts to build in late November, when the major samba schools (clubs) start open rehearsals for the events still several months away.

During Carnaval, the sound of samba is heard throughout the city, seemingly for 24 hours without a break. There is hardly anywhere you can go in the city where samba music is not a part of the general din. That is because hundreds of roaming bands play and dance on street corners everywhere.

There are three major components to Carnaval. Fancy **costume balls** are held throughout the city with the official opening ball held in the Rio Yacht Club on Friday night. As mentioned previously, **roaming bands** play samba music on street corners while listeners dance and sing. Many are in costumes. The parades of the samba clubs (called **schools**) are held on Sunday and Monday evenings at a specially built venue called The Sambodrome. They are incredible extravaganzas lasting well into the early

morning hours. It shouldn't surprise you that many businesses close for the five days.

Some Background

Carnaval, as with many other elements of Afro-Brazilian culture, was imported to Brazil via Salvador, Bahia. The name, from the Italian *carnevale*, seems to mean farewell to meat. Pre-Lenten festivals can be traced back to the celebrations of Isis and Osiris in Egypt and those for Dionysus in Greece and in Rome. In the Middle Ages the church hierarchy placed Carnival before Ash Wednesday, making a clear demarcation between celebration and solemn homage. The primary source for Brazil's celebration is the pre-Lenten festival in Portugal that had its beginnings in the Azores in the 15th and 16th centuries. The first pre-Lenten celebration in Salvador was called *Entrudo*. Street activities turned violent when the city's middle class and poor protested the balls and special events that they were not permitted to attend. In 1884, Rio held its first Carnaval and had similar problems. In an attempt to stop the violence, all street activities were

banned and the action moved indoors. That is when the costume balls started. But the lower classes would not be denied and they started celebrating at street festivals. The idea grew and soon more organized processions began. They included floats and confetti, but you'll be surprised to learn that there was no music. In the 1920s the samba beat became the distinctive sound of the celebration. Over the 60 years of modern Carnaval, class differences have blurred and wealthy Cariocas and those less fortunate take part in many of the same events.

Carnaval Today

Bands & Street Carnaval

Although the bands (*bandas*) and street dancing take place throughout the city, you should head to Copacabana, which as usual is at the heart of the action. This is not an organized event but rather a spontaneous one. Groups of musicians, young and old alike, form a *banda* and pick a street corner where they start to play. Soon, a crowd gathers and informal singing and dancing begins.

> **NOTE:** Most Cariocas know the songs of each samba school in advance, as well as the most popular songs from years past. You can hum along.

Some bands grow so large that traffic comes to a standstill. If you prefer a more organized event head to Cinelândia (downtown), where the squares and streets are closed to traffic and there are *bandas* on every corner. Hun-

dreds of costumed revelers join in the fun. Specific groups stake out the same spot each year.

> **WARNING:** As happens in any large unorganized group, pickpockets try their luck. Leave all valuables behind. Take only enough money for a taxi and some liquid refreshment. Don't keep your wallet in your back pocket or money in a backpack.

Carnaval Balls

Rio's mayor officially opens the celebration when he hands the keys to the city to the Carnaval King (Rei Momo), whose reign lasts for five frenetic days. Although there have been informal balls earlier in the week, Friday night is "the" night. Balls are held in every major hotel, in private clubs and cultural centers and many posh nightclubs. They range from informal (poolside) to elaborate. At the elaborate balls, the cream of Carioca society vie for prizes in costumes that are encrusted with gems. Winners are announced and their photos appear in newspapers and on TV.

You can get ball tickets in advance and, if you want to attend one of the fashionable balls, you must plan ahead. You can wear formal attire rather than a costume if you prefer. Friday's Rio Yacht Club Ball is very famous, as is the ball at the Copacabana Palace Hotel. It is held on Saturday.

The Copacabana Palace Hotel holds an elaborate Carnaval ball

Less formal, but just as much fun is the Red and Black Ball (Baile Vermelho e Preto) held in Flamengo on Friday. It honors the popular Flamengo Soccer Club and has the distinction of having guests with the skimpiest costumes. Others include the Black and White Ball on Fridays in Botafogo, at the Help Disco in Copacabana and at the Canecão niteclub. The biggest ball, held at City Hall, draws huge crowds and mind-boggling costumes.

Tickets: Talk to your hotel concierge or log on to www.riodejaneiro-turismo.com.br. One agency that often has tickets is **Blumar Turismo**, www.blumar.com. Check the web as well.

Samba School Parades
(Desfile de Escolas de Samba)

This is the crescendo of the Carnaval celebration and it is the most moving, thrilling, exciting and exhausting experience you'll ever be part of. And you will be part of it because it is impossible to just look on impassively. Parades were at one time scheduled for Sunday nights and, because the 14 top-rated schools are invited to take part, often lasted 18 hours. But a few years ago, it was decided to have seven schools march on Sunday, and the other seven march on Monday. This makes the event more manageable and gives more people a chance to experience the excitement. In 1984, the site was changed from Av. Presidente Vargas (downtown) to a special stadium that can seat over 60,000 spectators in grandstands as well as in reserved seats. Another 3,000 seats on ground level have tables and bar service.

© Rudy Huhold/Embratur

Grand parade at the Sambodrome

The parades start in early evening and no school can march for more than 1½ hours – but there are long waits between schools (for clean-ups) so dig in for an extended stay. The schools are actually engaged in a determined competition. As early as the preceding August, participants meet to select a theme (which must be strictly Brazilian). They choose their main dancers and musicians and then write songs and music, sew elaborate costumes and choreograph the dances. It is not unusual to have 5,000 members marching – and keep in mind that nothing is haphazard or improvised. They rehearse constantly – and you can attend rehearsals. One thing the dancers and musicians all have in common is a look of pure joy on their faces.

> **TIP:** If your visit doesn't coincide with Carnaval, rehearsals are an excellent way to see how participants prepare. We tell you how and where to see a rehearsal on page 256, in *Rio After Dark*.

Each school is preceded by a float that displays the school's name and its theme. Note that each school includes a group of dancing women who wear the traditional dress of Bahia where Carnaval started over a century ago.

The judges watch that each traditional rite is adhered to and points are awarded for percussion, harmony, intricacy of movement, the story line, the costumes and the lyrics. Points are deducted for even minor miscues.

You'll notice that Cariocas seated near you sing and dance along with each school. We once assumed that the words would be kept under wraps until the big night. On the contrary, the songs are pre-recorded and by Carnaval time everyone knows the words.

All in all, Rio's Carnaval is spectacular and unique.

Tickets: If you want to get tickets for the Samba School Parades, do so long in advance. Agencies buy blocks of reserved seats and they sell out quickly. Contact **Riotur** at www.riodejaneiro-turismo.com.br, or your hotel concierge. An agency that often has tickets is **Blumar Turismo**, www.blumar.com.br. Check the web as well.

Carnaval dates:

'08: Feb 1-5
'09: Feb 20-24
'10: Feb 12-16

Tip: Friends of ours have purchased scalper tickets. If you do so, make sure you get both parts of the ticket – the plastic card and the attached paper slip with the seat number. Check the date as well.

Best Places to Dine

Decisions! Decisions! No one likes to make them while on vacation, but choosing a place to eat in Rio requires a decision – albeit a delicious one. There are literally a thousand dining spots throughout the city, ranging from sophisticated gourmet stops with internationally trained chefs who would be at home in New York or Paris, to neighborhood bars (*botequim*) that serve ice-cold beer and inexpensive comfort food under the stars. It

is not unusual to find several restaurants on a single block. Amazingly, they all are crowded. Cariocas enjoy eating out. Since dinner doesn't get started till after 9 pm and is customarily served till 1 or 2 am, restaurants are the city's social centers.

Brazil is a country where cultures merged and nowhere is that more evident than in Brazilian foods. Traditional dishes from the state of Bahia and other northeastern regions originated with African slaves. They blend African spices with fresh fish, shrimp, pork and indigenous vegetables and add beans, rice and grains. It's analogous to "soul food" in the US. (See *The Tastes of Brazil*, pages 13-16).

Traditional dishes from Brazil's southern region resemble those of Uruguay and Argentina – high-quality beef and lamb raised on *estancias* (cattle farms) there. These meats, mainstays of the Brazilian diet, are primarily served in *churrascarias*. There are two kinds of *churrascarias* – standard and *rodízio*. At the standard type, you select a meat (filet mignon, brisket, pork, chicken, sausage) and side dishes (potatoes, rice, plantains and tomato and onion salad). In a *rodízio*, all the meats are circulated through the restaurant on long skewers carried by waiters. You can sample every meat and eat as much as you like. The food will keep coming until you beg for mercy, usually by displaying a red card. *Rodízios* have become so popular that there are only a few standard *churrascarias* left. It's easy to get hooked on the *churrascarias*. The unique taste of the beef

comes from animals that are specifically fed to produce meat with little fat and the barbecuing technique that slowly grills the meat over an open hearth produces a distinct flavor. No sauce is put on the meat, but a variety of specially made sauces are on the table.

> **TIP:** Most Brazilians eat their *bife* rare, but you can request *na ponto* for medium and *bem passado* for well done.

Portuguese dishes remain very popular, as do the traditional dishes brought to Brazil by more recent immigrants from France, Italy and Japan.

Newcomers to the dining scene are restaurants that prepare scores of salads and other primarily vegetarian fare for take-out. Food is priced by weight. These eateries are most popular at lunch but a few (with tables) stay open for dinner. Juice bars and ice cream kiosks are also extremely popular. They are scattered throughout the city, but are most common near beach areas.

DINING ADVICE & ETIQUETTE

Breakfast need not concern you since most hotels offer it as part of your rate. If it isn't included, there are cafés that serve coffee, fresh breads and pastries. Weekend brunch is very popular. In Rio, that usually means a huge buffet. Lunch has evolved here. Until a few years ago, it was a long leisurely meal, served from noon to 3 pm, in the European fashion. More common nowadays is a salad or sandwich at an outdoor café, a kiosk at

the beach or at a restaurant that focuses on lighter fare served at a quicker pace. Some restaurants have buffets at lunch and there are many fast-food spots as well. Dinner restaurants don't start to fill up till 9 pm and generally serve till midnight weeknights and even later on weekends.

Dress

Casual **attire** is the norm here year-round, but a few of the upscale restaurants have a dress code. That usually means men require a collared shirt, a sport coat and closed shoes. Ties are not required (they are worn only on special occasions). Ladies can wear chic resort wear at these eateries. Cariocas eating in the city's fine restaurants are invariably well dressed in fashionable, trendy clothing and are impeccably groomed. You'll feel most comfortable dressed to match. If you want to eat dinner in shorts, T-Shirts and sneakers, there are many casual choices.

Payment

Credit cards are widely accepted. All restaurants reviewed here accept them (except where specifically noted), but smaller spots on the beaches may not. MasterCard, Visa and Diners Club are most popular and American Express is accepted in most places.

Restaurants usually add a service charge of 10% to your bill. Leave an additional amount for good service. Some restaurants impose a

cover charge (*couvert*) for bread and assorted vegetables. You can decline this if you wish. Menus are often bilingual.

Reservations

Restaurants here are invariably small, so reservations are recommended especially on weekends and in the summer months. A few restaurants, particularly those serving French fare, require that you reserve. We have noted them in the review.

> **Note:** Shrimp dishes are often the most expensive on the menu, often twice as much as any other.

The Alive Restaurant Scale

The scale is keyed to a three-course dinner (appetizer, entrée, dessert). Alcohol is not included.	Very Expensive – $60 Expensive – $45-60 Moderate – $30-45 Inexpensive – under $30 *PRICE IN US DOLLARS*

Many of the city's finest restaurants are in hotels. They are privately owned and do not operate as the hotel's dining room.

PORTUGUESE

ANTIQUARIUS
Rua Aristedes Espínola 19, Leblon
☎ (21) 2294-1049; Daily, noon-2 am
Very Expensive

Many consider Antiquarius to be Rio's finest restaurant and it is hard to argue with that. The specialties are Portuguese, but most of

the menu is continental cuisine. In its own building just off the beach in Leblon, Antiquarius looks like an antique shop with tables. In fact the upper level, which is a lovely sitting area, sells antiques, including maps. The whitewashed walls and ceiling are in sharp contrast to the orange beams that separate the room into intimate dining areas. Ornate chandeliers and gilt-framed paintings add to Antiquarius' quiet appeal.

A FACE IN THE CROWD

Many an important business deal has been completed at Antiquarius and it is often the place that Cariocas entertain celebrities, so don't be surprised to see Mick Jagger or Spain's King Juan Carlos.

Antiquarius has a bar area with cocktail tables so you can stop for a drink before dinner.

Specialties include codfish prepared in a variety of ways, *cataplana* (seafood stew) and wild boar served with fava beans. Quail and rabbit are also on the menu. Leg of lamb is seen on many tables, as are the Macau-style shrimp. Antiquarius has an unusually good wine list featuring French, Spanish and Portuguese wines. Reservations are a must. Casual chic attire.

BARRACUDA
Av. Infante Dom Henrique, Glória Marina, Glória
☎ (21) 2265-4641
Mon-Sat, noon-midnight; Sun, noon-6 pm
Moderate

Another popular Portuguese restaurant that has thrived for over 20 years. Barracuda's specialties lean to the sea – codfish is king and is prepared in several ways, with

mashed potatoes, peppers and onions the most traditional. Squid dishes seem to attract locals and lobster, shrimp and other fish are also lures. Head to Barracuda on Friday if you'd like to sample their famous octopus *feijoada*. The restaurant is in a lovely Portuguese-style building and its location on the marina overlooking Guanabara Bay simply adds to a memorable dining experience. Casual.

FRENCH

OLYMPE
Rua Custódio Serrão 62, Jardim Botânico
☎ (21) 2539-4542
Dinner Mon-Sat; lunch Fri only
Very Expensive

Claude Troisgros, the third generation of the famed French family of chefs, has been in Brazil since 1979. This newest eatery, named for his mother, uses Brazilian ingredients prepared using French nouvelle cooking techniques. The results are mouthwatering.

The corner building has an Art Deco exterior so it is a surprise to find avant-garde décor. The white walls, ceiling, cloths and china and low-hanging globe lights make the room, with perhaps a dozen tables, look bigger than it is. If you watch the chefs work behind a glass wall, you'll see the fresh fruits and vegetables – raisins, pears, figs, mushrooms, artichokes and spinach among others – that are used to create light sauces and dishes. The menu changes seasonally and "with chef creativity," but one recent menu had such

starters as grilled shrimp with hearts of palm and coconut milk and crispy watercress mousse with blue cheese. Entrées include crispy snapper with eggplant confit in hot tomato sauce, roasted rock lobster with linguini and duck breast with roasted figs and caramelized endive. The N.Y. cheesecake with ice cream is delicious, but it is hard to pass up the melted chocolate cake with roasted pistachio ice cream. Chic attire. Reservations recommended.

LE PRÉ CATELAN
Hotel Sofitel Rio Palace, Av. Atlântica 4240
Copacabana
☎ (21) 2525-1232; Dinner only, closed Sun
Very Expensive

Everything works so smoothly here that it seems effortless, but clearly great care has gone into making your dinner a memorable experience.

Come a bit early to Le Pré Catelan and enjoy a cocktail on the terrace that faces Copacabana Beach.

The restaurant is on Level E, not the ground floor. The dining room (which has a non-smoking area) is quite formal, with dark woods, rattan-backed armchairs, blue and yellow tableclothes and flowers at each table. Soon the maitre d' will appear to explain the dishes chef Roland Villard has prepared for that evening. Dinner often opens with a selection of "small plates" using foie gras, mushrooms, shellfish, meats and vegetables. The sauces are light and delicious. You can make them your entire dinner or you can move on to entrées such as duck with passion fruit or fresh fish with a light tomato sauce. There is a prix fixe menu with three options for each course as well. New menus

appear monthly. There is a dress code. Reservations required.

LE SAINT HONORÉ
Hotel Le Meridien, 37th fl, Av. Atlântica 1020, Leme
☎ (21) 3873-8880; Dinner only, closed Sun
Very Expensive

There are glorious views of Copacabana from this top floor dining room, but it is the food that lures diners here time and again. The dining room has been renovated and is now muted and spacious. When the restaurant opened, it was associated with famed chef Paul Bocuse, but French cooking has changed and so has Saint Honoré. Chef Dominique Oudin's menu is classically French but it is not laden with heavy sauces. Rather, he has incorporated many tropical ingredients and the food is much lighter. Try the veal braised in coffee or the coq au vin. The Dublin Bay prawn and watercress terrine makes a great opener. You can follow it with the sea bream and artichoke ravioli. Splurge on the chocolate beignet for dessert. You can work off the calories later. There is a jazz pianist nightly and a well-trained staff. There is a dress code. Reservations required.

CÂREME BISTRÔ
Rua Visconde de Caraveles 113, Botafogo
☎ (21) 2537-2274; Dinner only, closed Sun & Mon
Expensive

Compared with the French restaurants above, Câreme is a more casual bistrô. You'll see and feel the difference as soon as you arrive. The room is small, with mirrored walls, white tablecloths and a highly polished wooden floor. The diners are younger. And

Câreme is the name of a 19th-century chef who catered to Russian and British royalty.

although everyone is well dressed, jackets are not required. The food, however, is on a par with its more formal counterparts. Owner/chef Flavia Quaresma is one of Rio's best known chefs and one of only a handful of women running first-class kitchens here. She was previously the chef at Eça (downtown), where her menu was also innovative.

There are several prix-fixe menus nightly, as well as a tasting menu. Menus change seasonally. Specialties include game; the veal, rabbit and duck stew on mushrooms and greens is most popular. Grilled duck with a *cassis jus*, oysters boiled in green tea with a tangerine sauce and entrecôte with dried junipers are repeat menu items. Desserts are rich and delicious. The food is fabulous and the restaurant romantic – a great combination. Reservations required.

ITALIAN

CIPRIANI
Hotel Copacabana Palace, Av. Atlântica 1702
Copacabana
☎ (21) 2545-8747; Lunch & dinner daily
Very Expensive

Head to the cocktail lounge and order a *Cipriani* (a Bellini elsewhere, with champagne and fresh peach juice). You can enjoy your drink there, but we suggest you head outside and take a seat on the terrace, which overlooks an illuminated pool and garden area. Enveloped by the hotel, the terrace is serene and far removed from the Av. Atlântica scene.

The dining room is stunning, with highly polished marble floors and French windows that open to the terrace. Huge flower vases break the room into intimate dining areas. The food, classic Northern Italian fare with Brazilian touches, matches the setting. The menu changes frequently to take advantage of seasonal fruits and vegetables. Starters may include smoked clams, raw oysters, small ravioli with truffles or with mozzarella and eggplant. Duck breast with a balsamic vinegar sauce is a light entrée, as are the scallops in oyster sauce. More substantial dishes include veal with lemon and capers on a crispy potato pancake or tuna with an orange marinade. Pastas and risottos are often on the menu. If you can't decide, try the tasting menu. Cipriani makes fresh breads daily and has a special vegetarian menu. It's a special dining experience and you'll see why people are not in a hurry to leave. Dress code. Reservations required.

Don't be surprised if you have to wait a bit at Cipriani. People tend to linger.

MARGUTTA
Av. Henrique Dumont 62, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2259-3887
Dinner nightly; lunch Sat & Sun only
Moderate

Blending seafood with terrific Italian specialties, Margutta is a personal favorite. It is small, with two dining levels (the upper floor is for smokers). Tables have white cloths and china and comfortable caneback chairs. There are fresh flowers on each table. The muted lighting helps create a casual ambience, as does the quietly efficient service. You never feel rushed. Small white pizzas or Milan-style squid are wonderful with cock-

tails. Margutta's signature dish is the baked cod with tomatoes, olives and onions. It's delicious and identical each time we've ordered it. Spaghetti with clams, seafood tagliatelle and risotto with shellfish are other favorites. Lobster steamed in foil with risotto is the most popular item on the menu. If you aren't in the mood for seafood, try one of the steak, lamb or chicken dishes. Margutta's clientele consists of locals who eat here often. Casual chic attire.

Margutta's downtown restaurant is at Av. Graça Aranha 1 on the second floor. ☎ (21) 2563-4091.

QUADRIFOGLIO
Rua JJ Seabra 19, Jardim Botânico
☎ (21) 2294-1433
Lunch & dinner weekdays; dinner only Sat
Moderate

Rua JJ Seabra is a key street in the Jardim Botânico district. It has several restaurants and night spots and the street is alive well into the early morning. Quadrifoglio is the best dining spot in the area and has been successful for over 20 years. The kitchen is run by Silvana Bianchi, one of a handful of female chefs in Rio. Her food is innovative and creative. Some recent menu choices include a soup with small foie gras dumplings, asparagus, peas and mushrooms. It's delicious. The scallops are served with polenta and the osso bucco with beans. There are dishes using game such as *rhea* (ostrich) and guinea fowl.

Silvana offers a truffle menu each year when they are available.

This is not your traditional Italian dining room, but you'll enjoy eating here. Casual chic.

GERO
Rua Aníbal de Mendonça 157, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2239-8158
Weekdays, noon-4 pm, 7 pm-midnight
Sat & Sun, noon-midnight
Expensive

Gero is a fairly recent addition to Rio's dining scene. It is owned by the Fasano group, which runs several successful eateries in São Paulo. Two doormen greet guests at this converted private house on one of Ipanema's loveliest streets. The dining room is large and elegant with a beamed ceiling, exposed brick walls and green plants. Tables are widely spaced and attractively set. The house's signature dish is delicious – spaghetti with squid, shrimp, clams, lobster and fresh tomatoes. Pasta with veal ragu in a white wine sauce, ravioli, risotto and seafood salad are other fine choices. Casual chic attire.

D'AMICI
Rua Antônio Vieira 18, Leme
☎ (21) 2541-4477; Daily, noon-1 am
Expensive

D'Amici is not the most impressive looking dining spot in town and it doesn't have a great location, but Cariocas love it and it is always bustling – so it must be the food. If you want to be adventurous, try the wild boar ribs. The meat falls off the bone. Other specialties include the lamb shank and lamb with arugula risotto. D'Amici is famous for its wine list. They have over 300 labels in a broad price range and serve 30 types by the glass. Casual chic attire.

SEAFOOD

SATYRICON
Rua Barão da Torre 192, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2521-0627; Daily, noon-2 am
Expensive

Owned by two Italian brothers, Satyricon is one of the city's most elegant and attractive eateries.

The variety of foods served here makes it hard to place Satyricon in any one category so, taking the easy way out, we've decided to call it an Italian-Seafood restaurant. And don't forget the sushi! Many consider Satyricon the city's finest seafood eatery and shellfish are frequently featured in pasta and risotto dishes.

Widely spaced, impeccably set tables, subdued lighting and background music all combine to make dining here special. Start with the three-fish carpaccio. Selections change daily, but the swordfish is remarkable. Other starters include fried squid, oysters on the half-shell and mussels in a wine, garlic and parsley broth. Or you can start with white pizza, Parma ham and melon, or a Caprese salad. The signature dish is fish baked in a rock-salt crust, although the fish baked with tomatoes, garlic, wine and oregano is another good choice. The fish is always that day's catch. Salmon steamed in foil with mushrooms and wine or grilled tuna with scallops and lobster are outstanding. Linguini with lobster is among the pastas offered. A sushi bar offers sushi, sashimi and California rolls in combination dishes.

There is a fine wine list.

NOTE: Satyricon's sister eatery in Búzios fed both Madonna and Brigitte Bardot.

MARIUS CRUSTÁCEOS
Av. Atlântica 290 B, Leme
☎ (21) 2104-9002; Daily, noon-midnight
Expensive

You can't mistake this seafood eatery for its sister *churrascaria* next door. Just look for the artifacts from old ships that decorate the large dining room (it seats almost 200 people) and then gaze out the windows that face the beach and ocean beyond. Unique in Rio, this is a seafood *rodízio*, where platters of seafood are circulated through the restaurant. You can select what you like and as much as you like. There is also a huge buffet with Brazilian traditional seafood stews, raw oysters, shrimp and salads. If a seafood exists, Marius serves it. Casual.

CHURRASCARIAS

Lean beef, lamb, sausages and chicken grilled slowly over an open wood fire are mainstays of a Brazilian diet.

NOTE: *Churrascarias* tend to be large. Some seat over 300 people.

CHURRASCARIA PORCÃO
Av. Infante D. Henrique, Flamengo Park
☎ (21) 3461-9020; Daily, 11:30 am-1:30 am
Moderate

Porcão *churrascarias* (over 15 branches in Brazil and one in New York) started the *rodízio* revolution when their first restaurant, opened over 30 years ago. Brazilians of all ages eat here and parties and business meetings are held in them as well. Beef (a half-dozen cuts), lamb, pork, chicken, duck

and a variety of sausages are rotated through the dining areas by skewer-toting waiters. You select from them until you can't eat any more. Sides (tomato-onion salad, French fries, rice, plantains, hearts of palm) are ordered separately. There is a fixed price. *Churrascarias* are big and noisy so cannot be considered "fine" dining, but the food is fabulous and the restaurants are moderately priced. We have listed the Porcão in Flamengo Park because it offers great views of Sugar Loaf and Guanabara Bay, but other branches are Rua Barão da Torre 218, Ipanema; Av. Armando Lombardi 591, Barra; Av. NS Copacabana 1144, Copacabana. Casual attire.

Some Porcão locations have salad bars.

CHURRASCARIA MARIUS
Av. Atlântica 290 A, Leme
☎ (21) 2104-9000
Weekdays, noon-4 pm, 6 pm-midnight
Sat & Sun, noon-midnight
Moderate

Marius is one of Rio's most popular *churrascarias* and has been for many years. It is huge, with over 250 seats. You can sip a *caipirinha* (a sugarcane-based drink with lime and ice) while you wait to be seated. In addition to the roving meats, Marius has a buffet that features salads, lobster, cheeses, *feijoada* and carpaccios. There is also a dessert buffet. Casual attire.

Feijoada *is a mixture of stewed meat (beef, pork, sausage) cooked in a spicy sauce and served with black beans, cabbage and farofa.*

BARRA BRASA
Av. Afrânio de Melo Franco 131, Leblon
☎ (21) 2239-4491; Daily, noon-2 am
Moderate

Churrascaria? Sushi? Vegetarian? Barra Brasa is difficult to categorize since it has

something to please many palates. It is first and foremost a *rodízio churrascaria*. The meats that circulate through the large dining area on gigantic skewers are delicious and there are so many different cuts of beef, lamb, chicken and sausage that one loses count quickly. Side dishes include fried plantains, rice, potatoes and farofa. On the other hand, Barra Brassa is great for vegetarians because it has an enormous salad bar. It includes all the usual salad fixings plus herrings, quail eggs, smoked salmon, shrimp and marinated vegetables. You can fill up as many times as you wish. A sushi selection is part of the salad bar, while oysters on the half-shell and other shellfish are served at the table.

NOTE: Each diner gets a color-coded card. When the green side is up, the food keeps coming. Red tells the waiters you've quit.

Barra Brassa's second level is a popular venue for children's parties since there is a play area there. It's very informal. Lots of families eat here.

Another Barra Brasa is at Av. Ayrton Senna 2541, Barra da Tijuca, ☎ (21) 3329-7550.

CHURRASCARIA MAJÓRICA
Rua Senador Vergueiro 11, Flamengo
☎ (21) 2285-6789; Daily, noon-midnight
Moderate

One of the few remaining *churrascarias* that is not a *rodízio*, Majórica prepares each meat to order and serves grilled seafood as well. Main dishes are served with greens, rice with

bacon and hearts of palm in a buttery sauce. The food is excellent, but because each dish is cooked to order, expect to wait a bit. Majórica's clientele are faithful because the food is delicious and the ambience warm and friendly. Casual attire.

ESPLANADA GRILL
Rua Barão da Torre 600, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2512-2970; Daily, noon-1 am
Moderate

Another fine non-*rodízio* choice is Esplanada Grill, a favorite of local artists and residents. It has a small dining room and is known for the high-quality meats and leisurely service. Among the cuts of beef you'll find are T-bone and sirloin, as well as the house specialty, *picanha*, a steak that has a higher fat content than most other cuts. Other favorites include lamb chops, baby chickens and local fish baked with tomatoes, palm and rice. Fried hearts of palm, baked potatoes and rice are served with main courses. There are a variety of salads too. Casual ambience.

CHURRASCARIA BARRA GRILL
Av. Ministro Ivan Lins 314, Barra da Tijuca
☎ (21) 2493-6060; Daily, 11:30 am-1 am
Moderate

Like everything else in Barra, the Barra Grill seems larger than life. It can seat almost 300 hungry people and, incredibly, is often full on weekends. It offers more circulating meats (12), sides (eight) and buffet selections than any other *churrascaria* we've seen. Meats include several cuts of beef, lamb cuts and chops as well as chicken. The buffet tables are crowded with salads and you'll see

sushi, Middle Eastern dishes and traditional Bahian dishes such as shrimp empañadas and *casquinha de siri* (crab).

Barra Grill is just a few mins drive from Rio's longest beach and many a returning beachgoer makes a pit stop here.

The dining room has a relaxed atmosphere but a bustling undertone, since many of your fellow diners will be children. Casual attire.

OUTBACK STEAK HOUSE
Av. das Américas 6101, Barra Da Tijuca
☎ (21) 2438-5177
Mon-Sat, 12-4 pm, 6 pm-midnight
Sun, noon-11 pm
Inexpensive

Prefer US-style beef? Traveling with children? Consider Outback Steak Houses, which are located in several shopping centers. The meats served here are actually imported from Australia, but everything else will remind you of the USA. The signature dish is the crispy onion served whole. There are ribs, pork chops, huge burgers and steaks. Outbacks are crowded with families and usually bustling. No reservations, so expect to wait. Informal.

Other Outback locations are: N.Y. City Center, Barra da Tijuca, and Rio Plaza Shopping Center, Botafogo.

ETHNIC & ECLECTIC

CARLOTA
Rua Dias Ferreira 64, Leblon
☎ (21) 2540-6821
Dinner only Mon-Thurs; lunch Fri-Sat;
Sun brunch
Moderate

Readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* magazine selected Carlota as one of the 50 most interest-

ing restaurants in the world. Cariocas must have cast many of those votes if you can believe the long lines waiting for Sunday's brunch buffet. (It's definitely worth the wait.) Carlota is quite small, seating only 40 people and the décor, like the menu, is unusual. The small bar area near the entrance is delineated by hanging lamps, while the walls are adorned with colorful Brazilian handicrafts alongside photographs of Asian women seemingly from the 1930s. Somehow it works.

The menu offers braised beef ragout, grilled duck breast with fresh peach sauce and tuna with foie gras, and mashed potatoes with macademia nuts. But it is the daily specials where chef Carla Pernambuco's flair becomes most apparent. They are listed on a blackboard and, of course, vary. However, don't pass on the Asian rolls no matter what they are that day – sometimes Vietnamese style, sometimes filled with Peking duck or crabmeat and ginger. They are fabulous. Fried samosas and rice and mushroom cakes are also standouts. Try the guava soufflé for dessert. Casual chic.

The key at Carlota is to order small plates and share them so you can enjoy the variety.

EÇA
H. Stern Jewelers, Av. Rio Branco 128, Centro
☎ (21) 2524-2399; Weekdays, noon-4:30 pm
Moderate

Beautiful natural lighting fills this elegant restaurant in the lower level of the H. Stern shop, downtown. Named for the famous 19th century writer who immortalized good food in his writings, Eça feels like a private salon. It attracts executives, lawyers and business

people who work nearby, for high-power lunches. The Belgian chef offers an eclectic menu. Tuna tartare, shrimp in curry sauce with guacamole, and penne with shrimp, tomatoes and other vegetables are delicious. For something more substantial, there are grilled steaks, duck breast and fish. Desserts are fabulous. Casual chic.

GARCIA Y RODRIGUES
Av. Ataulfo de Paiva 1251, Leblon
☎ (21) 3206-4100; Daily, 8 am-midnight
Moderate

This establishment is a category into itself. It houses a café, a deli, a wine shop, a patisserie, an ice-cream parlor, a caterer and a fine brasserie. Whew! Start your day in the café, where freshly baked breads and pastries fill the air with a mouthwatering aroma. Later, you can eat-in or take out sandwiches, salads and sliced meats. The brasserie serves French cuisine, including small lobsters with spinach and carrot mousse and duck breast with cabbage strudel or orange sauce. Don't forget the ice cream for dessert. Casual attire in the café. Casual chic in the brasserie.

While the food at Garcia y Rodriguez is French, the ambience is all Carioca.

ZAZÁ BISTRÔ TROPICAL
Rua Joana Angélica 40, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2247-9102; Dinner only, daily
Inexpensive

Dishes at Zazá combine Brazilian fare with Asian and Middle Eastern flavors, making it one of the few fusion restaurants in Rio. Everything has an original twist – from the drinks to the food and even the seating. There are the standard tables on the ground

floor and better seating on the more decorous verandah. Instead, head to the second-floor lounge, where everyone takes off their shoes and sits on the floor, where they lean against soft silk-covered pillows. They are surrounded by candles and lanterns. The effect is "harem" or "Arabian Nights." It's great! For an unusual drink try the *caipirinha*, which is usually made with *cachaça* (sugar-cane juice) or sometimes vodka. Here it's made with sake. The Bloody Mary, usually made with vodka, is here made with tequila. It's quite a different taste. Starters include rabbit croquettes with an orange sauce, ceviche, shrimp sautéed in spiced honey and – the best choice – mini *acarajés* served with tomato chutney. Salmon sashimi with passion fruit sauce, sand perch served with mashed plantains and even shrimp ravioli are delicious. There are vegetarian specialties. Ethnic music plays in the background – all that's missing is a belly dancer. Informal.

ZUKA
Rua Dias Ferreira 233, Leblon
☎ (21) 3205-7154
Weekdays, 7 pm-1 am; Sat, Sun, 1 pm-midnight
Moderate

Zuka is the Portuguese word for pumpkin and pumpkin is served here in soup, as a vegetable and, of course, for dessert. This is a trendy spot with tables set around a sunken kitchen where really innovative dishes are prepared and served on big rectangular plates. The chef, a young woman, serves grilled meats, pastas and seafood. Local fish in pistachio sauce is served with honey-mashed potatoes and the thin skirt steak is

served with baby potatoes and leek confit. Try the sundae with three varieties of ice cream, nuts and marshmallows. It's shareable. Casual chic.

PECADO
Rua Barão da Torre 152, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2522-5198; Daily, noon-midnight
Moderate

Pecado is the Portugese word for sin. The only sin possible at this Nuevo Latino eatery is gluttony because the food is so appealing you'll want to taste everything. Start your meal in the lounge on the second floor, where drinks and tapas are served. Chef Checho Gonzales' menu includes gazpacho, seafood ceviche, jumbo shrimp with grilled mangos and fresh fish with plantains and hearts of palm. Small plates include empañadas filled with meat, vegetables or chicken and wontons filled with shrimp and served with chutney. Pecado has colorful floral cloths and low-hanging lamps. It is casual.

CASA DA SUÍÇA
Rua Cándido Mendes 157, Glória
☎ (21) 2252-5182
Lunch & dinner Sun-Fri; dinner only Sat
Moderate

Brazil's only Swiss eatery, Casa Suíça is housed in a perfect replica of a Swiss chalet. It has thrived for over 50 years. The tables are lit by gas lamps and young couples sit side-by-side sharing fondues. The food also includes German and Austrian dishes, many of them including sausages. There are schnitzels, raclettes and apple strudel. The recipes are absolutely old-country. There's

an indoor garden and a very popular bar called "The St. Moritz." Casual.

SHANGAI
Av. Presidente Wilson 164, Centro
☎ (21) 2533-3411; Weekdays, 11:30 am-9 pm
Moderate

You can count the number of Chinese restaurants in Rio on one hand – but Shangai has carved out a niche of itself. The chefs, furniture and accessories were all brought from China. Start with the dim sum. Curried pork, shrimp and vegetable fillings are delicious. Also delicious are the steamed dumplings (*gyozas*) that come with many different fillings. Entrées include shrimp or fish with soy and chopped chicken with vegetables. Casual.

Shanghai is popular at lunch, when local workers drop by.

JAPANESE & SUSHI

YASUTO TANAKA
Av. Epitácio Pessoa 1210, Lagoa
☎ (21) 2287-0598
Dinner only weekdays, lunch & dinner weekends
Moderate

Mr. Tanaka has been in the restaurant business for many years, but it's fair to say he's never had a better location than this one facing the Lagoa. There are several dining areas. The second-floor room is the most formal, with highly polished tables, leather-backed chairs and banquets along the walls that are decorated with intriguing abstract wall hangings. A popular option here is to eat in traditional Japanese style, where diners remove their shoes and sit at low tables set in open pits. The first-floor dining area is less

formal and offers a view of the lagoon. You should opt for a table on the open-air terrace, where you can see the water and hear the sounds of Cariocas enjoying the recreational areas around the water. The food is terrific. There is a full sushi menu as well as a traditional one. The tempuras and teppenyaki dishes are delicious, particularly the shrimp tempura. Desserts aren't special, but you can cross the street and pick up dessert and coffee at one of the kiosks around the Lagoa. Casual attire.

SUSHI LEBLON
Rua Dias Ferreira 256, Leblon
☎ (21) 2512-7830
Daily, lunch noon-4 pm, dinner 7 pm -1:30 am
Moderate

For years this was the most popular Japanese restaurant in the city, but on our last visit it looked like it needed a facelift. Fortunately, it got one and it is once again a bustling spot that attracts many celebrities. One change was the addition of a sushi bar, which has become the heart of the restaurant. The non-sushi menu includes sea urchin tempura, grilled fish with passion fruit and grilled squid stuffed with shiitake mushrooms. They have a delicious crême brûlée for dessert. Flavored by fruit, it is served in the fruit itself. They have a sake menu. Casual.

MADAME BUTTERFLY
Rua Barão da Torre 472, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2267-4347
Daily, noon-midnight
Moderate

Taking its name from the Puccini opera, this is an outstanding Japanese restaurant – with a touch of Thai in both menu and décor. It is owned by two sisters, and the menu offers contemporary Japanese specialties but no sushi. Starters include pumpkin *gyoza* (dumplings) with shrimp and Beijing duck salad with a tangerine sauce. For a different taste, try the umewan soup that has plums, seaweed and horseradish. Main courses include lobster pancakes with shiitake mushrooms, grilled salmon with a honey and soy sauce and terrific sukiyaki. You'll dine comfortably to the strains of the opera – a very nice touch. Casual.

AZUMI
Rua Ministro Viveiros de Castro 127, Copacabana
☎ (21) 2541-4294; Dinner only, closed Mon
Moderate

If a poll was taken in the Brazilian-Japanese community here, Azumi would win as the most authentic Japanese restaurant in the city. It also serves some unique dishes such as caramelized grasshopper. Those attributes may actually work against Azumi, which is not as popular as those restaurants reviewed above, nor is it as attractive. Soups of blowfish fin, monk fish or soba are good openers, as are the shrimp *goyosas*, spicy squid and oysters vinaigrette. The sushi bar is on the second level. You can watch the "chef" prepare fresh eel, marinated lobster and traditional sushi and sashimi. Casual.

TIP: If you are unsure of what to order at Azumi, ask your fellow diners, virtually all of whom will be Japanese.

TRADITIONAL BAHIAN RESTAURANTS

YORUBÁ
Rua Arnaldo Quintela 94, Botagogo
☎ (21) 2541-9387
Dinner Wed-Fri; lunch & dinner Sat; lunch only Sun
Moderate

Yorubá may be the most authentic Brazilian restaurant in Rio. It uses original recipes brought from West Africa to create part of its menu. The other part features dishes created in Brazil by slaves who were brought here. The cuisine is often called Bahian. The menu is limited to three Brazilian dishes (such as crabmeat *moqueca*) and three West African dishes (such as strips of filet mignon with ginger) daily. The menu changes each day.

There are lots of sweets and traditional drinks at Yorubá.

Located in a private house, the décor is inspired by the African religious rites of Candomblé and Umbanda. It's a unique and fascinating dining experience. Very informal. Yorubá now accepts MasterCard.

YEMANJÁ
Rua Visconde de Pirajá 128, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2247-7004
Dinner Mon-Thurs; Lunch & dinner Fri-Sun
Inexpensive

Yemanjá is the goddess of the sea in the Candomblé religion and homage is paid to her in a special ceremony each New Year's Eve. (See *Macumba*, page 11, for details). This is one place where you should accept the couvert because it is a sampling of hors d'oeuvres. You can taste grilled squid, *vatapas* (fish stew) and tapioca pancakes. Main dishes, prepared for two, include

moquecas (seafood stew), *bobós* (shrimp stew) and *vatapas* (fish and chopped nuts). Very informal.

CASA DA FEIJOADA
Rua Prudente de Moraes 10, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2247-2776
Daily, noon-midnight
Moderate

Feijoada, Brazil's national dish, was introduced by African slaves. It is a thick stew made by combining several meats with black beans and white rice. *Feijoada* is typically eaten on Saturdays and holidays, but Casa da Feijoada makes it fresh daily. You can select the meats you want; they are shown to you on a heated soap stone and include bologna, jerk beef, sausage, pork loin, ribs, tongue, bacon and dried beef. The stew is commonly served with stir-fried cabbage and *farofa*. There is a terrific buffet and other typical Bahian dishes as well. Try the pumpkin with coconut for dessert. The restaurant's curved tables and carved chairs give the room a rustic colonial appearance. Walls are painted green and yellow (colors of the Brazilian flag) and covered with photographs that show slaves preparing *feijoada*. Very informal.

SIRI MOLE & CIA.
Rua Francisco Otaviano 50, Copacabana
☎ (21) 2267-0894
Daily, lunch & dinner; closed Mon
Moderate

Bahian seafood is the specialty of this restaurant, part of a chain, with restaurants throughout Brazil. This one is small and

comfortable, with tables facing big picture windows that open to the street. The menu boasts six varieties of *moqueca* (seafood stew). Crab, lobster, cod or prawns are options. All are cooked in palm oil with coconut milk, peppers, tomatoes and spices. Moquecas are big enough to share. Other options include *acarajés* (fried bean cakes), *vatapas* (fish and shrimp with a chopped peanut sauce) and *bobós* (shrimp in manioc sauce). If you'd like to taste several typical dishes, come on Saturday when there is a buffet. Casual.

*The chain was named for the soft shell crab (*siri*) that is harvested in north-eastern Brazil.*

There is another Siri Mole at Rio Branco 1, Centro. Its lunch menu features similar fare in smaller portions, salads and grilled seafood.

LIGHTER FARE

VIA SETE GRILL
Rua Garcia d'Ávila 123, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2512-8100
Daily, noon-midnight
Inexpensive

You'll feel right at home at Ricky Stern's dining spot on one of Ipanema's finest blocks. There is an air-conditioned dining area but, unless it is very hot, take a seat on the open-air terrace and watch the girls walk by. Via Sete serves arguably the best burgers in Rio and the barbecued sirloin steak sandwich is not far behind. The very popular picanha steak comes with grilled hearts of palm and onion rings. There are six varieties of burgers and a large number of wraps that are filled with meats, fish and vegetables and served

The Via Sete Grill offers delicious ice cream and smoothies.

with tasty dipping sauces. Brownies are delicious, as is the chocolate cake with pistachio ice cream. Informal.

A second branch is located downtown at Rua Sete de Setembro 43. It's open weekdays, 9:30 am-6:30 pm.

CONFEITARIA COLOMBO/CRISTÓVÃO
Rua Gonçalves Dias 32, Centro
☎ (21) 2232-2300
Weekdays, 8 am-10 pm; Sat, 10 am-5 pm; closed Sun
Inexpensive

The building at 32 Gonçalves Dias is well over 300 years old and Confeiteria Colombo has occupied it for 50 of those years. It has adapted to changing tastes without losing sight of its unique niche. A recent extensive renovation managed to retain the Art Nouveau décor. Magnificent mirrors, marble tables, floral tablecloths and chair backs and fine crystal are visible throughout. The mezzanine eatery, Cristóvão serves buffet-style with a dozen salads, sliced meats, marinated salmon, quiches and seafood dishes. The tea room on the lower level serves incredibly good pastries and desserts, as well as cocktails. But the best way to sample Colombo's fare is to select from the finger foods served at the food counters as you enter. Chicken drumsticks, stuffed shrimp, meat pies and daily specials can be ordered by the piece and eaten at the small circular tables nearby or in the plaza. Informal.

NOTE: A small Colombo Café has opened in Copacabana Fort. It has great views.

PIZZARIA CAPRICCIOSA
Rua Vinícius de Moraes 134, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2523-3394; Daily from 6 pm
Moderate

From its humble beginnings in Búzios, Capricciosa has become one of Rio's favorite pizzerias. The dining room has high ceilings and brick walls and is constantly bustling with Cariocas of all ages enjoying pizza. Known for unusual toppings, pies come with mushrooms, sausage, prosciuto, arugula and vegetables. They are baked in wood-burning ovens and served piping hot. A variety of antipastos are also available and there's a good wine cellar.

Pizzaria Capricciosa has branches at Rua Maria Angélica 37, Jardim Botânico, ☎ (21) 2527-2656, and Av. Olegário Maciel 108, Barra, ☎ (21) 2494-2212.

PIZZARIA FIAMMETTA
Rio Design Center, Av. das Américas 7777 #1
Barra da Tijuca
☎ (21) 2438-7500; Daily, noon-midnight
Moderate

Based on the crowds it draws, Fiammetta is Rio's most popular pizza stop. It serves 20 varieties and the selections change monthly but include Parma ham, leeks, shiitake and porcine mushrooms, salmon and calabresa sausage. Two wood-burning ovens go full-blast to accommodate the crowd of diners. There is an Italian buffet at lunch.

Pizzaria Fiammetta has another branch at the Rio Plaza Shopping Center, Botafogo, ☎ (21) 2438-7500.

JOE & LEO'S BURGERS
São Conrado Fashion Mall, Est. da Gávea 899
São Conrado
☎ (21) 2422-0775; Daily, noon-midnight
Inexpensive

A local hangout that serves huge burgers with a score of toppings – some familiar such as cheese or onions, and some unusual ones such as watercress and radicchio. Burgers can be made of duck or crabmeat, and a good vegetarian garden burger features lentils, nuts, carrots, zucchini and sesame seeds. There are salads too. Cheesecake is the big seller for dessert. The décor is retro – America in the 1950s and 1960s. Very casual. Expect to wait.

Joe & Leos has branches at: New York City Center, Barra da Tijuca; Rio Plaza Shopping, Botafogo; Rio Design Leblon, Leblon.

BANANA JACK ROADHOUSE
Rua dos Jangadeiros 6B, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2521-9055; Daily, 11 am-1 am
Inexpensive

Although the façade resembles an Alpine lodge, the interior is strictly American. This will become immediately obvious when you spy the "gorilla" mascot in his baseball cap. Banana Jack is a late-night stop if you simply can't go to sleep without a good burger and onion rings. Burgers come stuffed with a variety of ingredients – all delicious. Other menu items are Argentine-style steaks, German sausages and pastas. Wash everything

down with an ice-cold beer. The most popular dessert is a giant cookie served with ice cream and chocolate sauce. Young crowd. Very informal.

A button on each table at Banana Jack's lights a signal to summon the waiter.

BOTEQUIMS & BOTECOS

Brazilian "taverns" serve comfort foods and lots of cold draught beer. They are casual dining spots, inexpensive, and located throughout the city. They stay open late and are crowded well into the night. Most are open-air, but some more upscale spots are enclosed.

BOTECO 66
Av. Alexandre Ferreira 66, Lagoa
☎ (21) 2266-0838; Daily, noon-midnight
Moderate

Boteco 66 is virtually hidden by a high wall and greenery, so look for the street number.

This is not your typical tavern because it is owned by famed chef Claude Troisgros. Boteco 66 is set in a private house surrounded by gardens. It is quite small, with several dining areas, marble floors and starched tablecloths. Bistrô fare comes to mind with both French and Italian specialties. Look for cassoulets, mussels Provençal and beef Bernaise, as well as pizzas and risottos. It's a change of pace and price from Troisgros' other restaurant, Olympe. Casual chic.

DEVASSA
Rua Gal. San Martin 1241, Leblon
☎ (21) 2540-6087
Weekdays, 6 pm-1 am; Sat & Sun, 2 pm-2 am
Moderate

Ice cold beers, from light lagers to rich dark ales, accompany Calabresa sausages,

shrimp empañadas, duck croquettes and delicious sandwiches. Steak and cheese sandwiches seem most popular. Devassa is popular with yuppies and upscale singles who drink and smoke here well into the night. Very casual.

Additional branches are found at Av. Armando Lombardi 483, Barra, ☎ (21) 2494-7626, and Av. Lineu de Paula Machado 696, Jardim Botânico, ☎ (21) 3874-0009.

BOTEQUIM INFORMAL
Rua Humberto de Campos 646, Leblon
☎ (21) 2259-6967
Tues-Fri, 6 pm-1 am; Sat & Sun, noon-1 am
Inexpensive

One of Rio's most popular *botequims*, Informal is a happy mix of old-fashioned bar with a sophisticated ambience. Wooden tables, marble fixtures and an antique cash register on the counter give the restaurant a 1950s aura. The free-flowing beer, *caipirinhas* and snacks (including large sausages, pork ribs with BBQ sauce and cassava croquettes filled with jerk beef and cream cheese) are very popular. There are often long lines at night. Very casual.

Branches: Rua Barão da Torre 346, Ipanema, ☎ (21) 2247-6712; Rua Conde Bernadotte 26, Leblon, ☎ (21) 2540-5504; Av. das Américas 500, Barra, ☎ (21) 2492-2995.

CERVANTES
Av. Prado Júnior 335, corner of
Rua Barata Ribeiro, Copacabana
☎ (21) 2275-6147; Tues-Sun, noon-3 am
Inexpensive

Cervantes' sandwiches are renowned. Try the sliced filet mignon and melted cheese served in crispy bread, or the thick slices of pork and sweet pineapple. There are also main courses and lots of beer.

Branches: Shopping Via Parque, Av. Ayrton Senna, Barra, ☎ (21) 2421-3530; Comercial Park Place, Av. das Américas, Barra, ☎ (21) 2438-1458

BELMONTE FLAMENGO
Praia do Flamengo 300, Flamengo
☎ (21) 2552-3349; Daily, 9 am-1 am
Inexpensive

A local hangout, the 50-year-old Belmonte, is a traditional bar where lots of singles congregate, attracted by each other and the best draught beer in Rio. Belmonte is said to serve thousands of small "pastries" each day. Shrimp with ginger, jerk beef with cream cheese, crab and apricot with cheese or hearts of palm are delicious. Fried sardines, cassava croquettes and sandwiches too. There's a special *cachaça* menu. This works in much the same way as martini bar menu does in the US, with many cocktails made from the spirit.

Branch: Belmonte Leblon, Rua Dias Ferreira 521, Leblon.

BAR LUIZ
Rua da Carioca 39, Centro
☎ (21) 2517-0458; Mon-Sat, noon-midnight
Inexpensive

At the end of the 19th century a small German bar opened in downtown Rio. Named Bar Adolph for its owner, the bar moved to

this location in 1927. World War II made the name an unpopular one and so it was renamed Bar Luiz. What did not change were the tile floors, wooden tables and chairs and old photos showing the city at the turn of the century. You enter through a saloon-style door, along with local writers and politicians. The fare remains Austrian/German – bockwursts, bratwursts, sausages with sauerkraut, thick ham slices with potato salad and Wienerschnitzel. Everything is washed down with icy-cold Chopps, the beer of choice in Rio. Very casual.

Rua da Carioca is in a busy part of downtown. Streets are well lit and crowded.

VEGETARIAN & SALAD BARS

A dozen years ago, a lettuce leaf was a rare sight in Rio, but salad bars and vegetarian dishes, often charged by weight, are "hot" in the city. We'll list some popular ones.

AIPO & AIPIM

With five branches at this writing, this chain of self-serve eateries offers over 20 salads and hot dishes at a buffet. They also have a *churrascaria* where you can select grilled steaks, chicken and sausages. Your items will be billed by weight. Drinks are served at the tables. All are informal and inexpensive. They accept credit cards.

Branches: Rua do Ouvidor 108, Centro, ☎ (21) 2222-3423; Av. N.S. de Copacabana #391, #605, #920, Copacabana; Rua Visconde de Pirajá 145, Ipanema, ☎ (21) 2267-8313.

MR. OPI
Lunch only; closed weekends.

If you are exploring the historic downtown center of Rio, you'll appreciate the two Mr. Opi's, where white-clad waiters serve your selections from the inviting buffet tables. Selections include freshly cooked meats, fish and vegetables as well as Brazilian specialties. The menu changes daily. Informal.

Branches: Rua da Alfándega 91D, Centro; Rua da Quitanda 51, Centro.

CELEIRO
Rua Dias Ferreira 199, Leblon
☎ (21) 2274-7843
Mon-Sat, 10 am-5 pm; closed Sun

One of the few restaurants in the city that serves organic foods, Celeiro is always very crowded. There are a dozen tables and skylights keep the room bright. The buffets offer lots of salads, pastas, soups, sandwiches, chicken, quiches and vegetables. Most people take their food out. Great desserts too. Informal and inexpensive.

DOCE DELICIA
Rua Dias Ferreira 48, Leblon
☎ (21) 2249-2970
Daily, noon-midnight

At first glance, the restaurants look Asian, with bamboo walls, wicker furniture and a cooling waterfall. There are modern paintings and unusual candleholders throughout. Fixed-priced plates and daily specials are available, but your best bet is to choose your favorites (five to 15 selections) from the 40 combinations of vegetables, quiches, salmon, grilled steaks and cold pastas. The

salads are delicious and come with light yogurt-based dressings. There are main dish selections on a menu as well. Informal and inexpensive.

Branches: São Conrado Fashion Mall, ☎ (21) 2420-4943; Rua Aníbal de Mendoça 55, Ipanema, ☎ (21) 2259-0239.

JUICE BARS

In the US it is common to see people strolling along clutching a coffee container. In Rio, the liquid of choice is juice – usually fruit but sometimes vegetable. Healthy and refreshing, juice drinks are a Carioca craze. They are made from ingredients you select while you wait. There can be over 50 possible ingredients and scores of combinations. Fresh fruits or frozen fruit pulp often include bananas, pineapples, strawberries, oranges and watermelon, but also little-known fruits such as acai. Juice bars are popular year-round and most are located near beaches. Some sell sandwiches as well.

The popular drinks have ginger added to them.

Below are some well-known juice bars.

Big Polis, Av. Ataulfo de Paiva 505, Leblon

Polis Sucos, Rua Maria Quitéria 70A, Ipanema

Balada Mix, Av. Érico Veríssimo 805 B, Barra

Balada Sumos, Av. Ataulfo de Paiva 620, Leblon

Juice Co, Av. Olegário Maciel 231, Barra

Bibi Sucos, Rua Jardim Botânico 632, Jardim Botânico

Juice bars open at 8 am and stay open till late at night. They do not accept credit cards.

ICE CREAM (SORVETE)

Ice creams here are not artificially colored and are made in-house with such unusual flavors as mango ginger, caramel, chunky coconut, strawberry cheesecake and Surinam cherry. Low-fat and low-sugar options are available. Some cafés specialize in ice cream and beachside kiosks often sell it.

Felice Café, Rua Gomes Carneiro 30, Ipanema

Alex, Rua Vinícius de Moraes 146 B, Ipanema

Sorvete Brasil, Av. Pasteur 520, Urca tram station, Urca

Mil Frutas, Rua JJ Seabra, Jardim Botânico

Sorvetes Italia, Rua Marquês de Abrantes 64, Flamengo

Sorvetes Häagen-Dazs, São Conrado Fashion Mall

Sorvetes Felice, Rio Design Center, Barra, and in Rio Design Leblon, Leblon.

Best Places to Stay

Rio has a great many hotels – from deluxe to inexpensive – in all parts of the city. Surprisingly, since the city is fronted by

miles and miles of beach, only the Sheraton Rio Hotel is actually on a beach. The other beachfront hotels face the sand, but are actually across wide thoroughfares. This is a plus, since they offer stunning beach and ocean views, a front-row seat for Carioca watching and are away from the lively sand soccer and volleyball games that start at sunrise and go well into the night.

Another surprise is that the hotels closely resemble one another – no charming inns or historic B&Bs. If it weren't for the windswept flags and hotel signage, most of the hotels could pass for modern high-rise apartments. This is especially true of those choices in Copacabana and Ipanema/Leblon, where most of the hotels are located. They do not have large grounds, but several have swimming pools. There are a few notable exceptions – one being the Copacabana Palace Hotel, which occupies an historic building with Mediterranean-style architecture (see page 199). The greatest number of hotels are in Copacabana and there are excellent choices in Ipanema and Leblon as well. The city's newest hotels in Barra have landscaped grounds and larger swimming pools, but the drawback here is that little in the area is within easy walking distance. Un-

less you have a car, you'll have to rely on taxis for the most part.

We'll make the bulk of our hotel suggestions in these beach communities, so you'll be in the heart of the city – near enough to the beaches in the daylight hours and the city's best restaurants and night spots after dark. Rio's deluxe stops have prime locations, great views, and such amenities as swimming pools, satellite TV, dataports, fitness centers and fine dining. Hotels are not inexpensive but are far less expensive than comparable stops in the Caribbean or European cities. Less expensive choices a block or two from the beach have less spectacular views, smaller rooms and fewer amenities. All of the places we review are air-conditioned and have private bathrooms. Breakfast is included in the room rate for virtually every hotel except the deluxe ones. Most often it is served buffet-style and includes juices, fresh fruit, breads, pastries, cheese and deli meats – great coffee is a given.

HOTELS IN CENTRO

We have not recommended any hotels in Centro (downtown), although they do exist. The area is almost entirely commercial and quite deserted after business hours, except for Cinelândia and Lapa, which you can easily reach by taxi. It is not a good idea to walk through Centro after business hours.

Flamengo and Glória have good hotels in all price ranges. They are well maintained and

near enough to the Metrô so that you can be in Centro or Copacabana in 10 minutes. The drawback is they are generally older and not near the beach.

Major international hotel chains such as Sheraton, Intercontinental and Marriott are represented, but the greater number of choices are part of Brazilian hotel chains. They each have several hotels in Rio and throughout the country. Virtually every hotel has a website for inquiries and reservations.

"High Season" in Rio refers to the period from mid-December through Carnaval. Hotel rates rise during this time and it can be difficult to reserve a room in some of the upscale stops as the city hosts visitors from all over the world, as well as Brazilians from other parts of the country and Argentinian families on summer vacations. Some hotels offer "packages" during this time and there is often a required minimum stay during Carnaval. For the best deals, reserve well in advance.

HOTEL PRICE SCALE

The Department of Tourism rates hotels using a star system, with five stars being the most upscale. Stars are awarded solely based on the hotel's amenities, so five-star stops may have a pool, fitness center, room service and laundry and a myriad of other perks that may be important to you. Hotel prices are keyed to the US dollar, although you will be quoted a rate in Reais. Note that several taxes are added to that rate – generally a 10% service charge and a 5% city tax

charge. Hotels that are members of the Rio Convention and Visitor's Bureau also add a US $1-3 tourist charge.

While we use a scale keyed to price, rather than the star rating system, the two clearly correlate. Most hotels base prices on the view and size of your accommodation. Ask about amenities that are important to you.

Prices are based on a superior double room year-round, not during Carnaval.

Deluxe – $300+
Expensive – $200-300
Moderate – $100-200
Inexpensive – under $100

HOTELS

COPACABANA PALACE
Av. Atlântica 1702, Copacabana
☎ (21) 2548-7070
www.copacabanapalace.orient-express.com
Deluxe (Very!)

© Copacabana Palace Hotel

The Copacabana Palace, considered by many to be South America's grandest hotel, continues to dominate Av. Atlântica and the Copacabana Beach strip as it has since it was built in 1923 for a visit by the King of Belgium. Popularly known as "the Copa," the hotel is the social center for wealthy Cariocas and Brazilians from other parts of the country. Fashionable weddings, anniversaries

and charitable events are celebrated here and tickets to the Copa's Carnaval Ball are always in demand. The hotel has played host to visiting royalty (Princess Diana) and stars of film, stage, sports arenas and corporate boardrooms. It was designed by a French architect who used two French Riviera spots as inspiration. Fashioned in stucco, the Mediterranean-style building is an architectural classic and its service and ambience combine Latin and European styles.

Copacabana Palace was owned by a private family from 1923 until 1989, when it was purchased by Orient-Express Hotels. It has undergone an extensive refurbishment program that includes a modest expansion. All guest rooms were modernized as well as renovated, a new Executive Floor (the 5th) was added, as was a 6th floor that houses seven Penthouse suites. Almost half the accommodations are suites. Rooms are located in the main building while suites are in both the main and tower buildings. City view (streets), pool view or ocean view accommodations are available and priced accordingly. All accommodations are thoughtfully furnished with king or twin beds, well-stocked bathrooms, cable TV, mini-bars and in-room safes. Some suites and executive rooms have butler service. There are non-smoking rooms.

The most stunning renovation was the Copa pool, which is on the ground level between the buildings. One of the largest and most attractive pools in the city, it has a landscaped sun deck and **La Pergola**, the hotel's casual dining room nearby under a canopy.

Cipriani, arguably the city's finest Italian restaurant (see page 166), is visible from the sundeck. The hotel has a tennis court, health club and several nice shops. Beach service (towels, chairs, etc.) is provided.

The Copacabana Palace does not have any lobby to speak of, simply the utilitarian check-in and concierge desks, so guests and visitors tend to gravitate to the pool area. It's so serene, you'll find it hard to believe that Av. Atlântica and Copacabana Beach are just a few steps away.

Whatever hotel you select, stop by for a drink or splurge on dinner at Cipriani. You can't miss the building, which is artfully illuminated at night.

NOTE: The Copacabana Palace's rates are well above others in the Deluxe category. Expect to pay US $400+ year-round. Breakfast is not included.

SHERATON RIO HOTEL & TOWERS
Ave. Niemeyer, Leblon (Vidigal)
☎ (21) 2274-1122
www.sheraton-rio.com
Deluxe

© Sheraton Hotels

The Sheraton sits on a promontory jutting into the Atlantic Ocean. The area between Leblon and São Conrado is called Vidigal as is the beach that fronts the hotel. A personal favorite, the Sheraton is the only hotel in the city

that is actually on a beach and it has arguably the largest recreational area in town. There are three pools, a large sun deck, two tennis courts, a pool bar and two restaurants all overlooking the sand. The staff places beach chairs out for guests and local residents (usually children and fishermen use the beach as well). The hotel entrance is on the sixth floor and there are guest rooms both above and below the lobby level.

There are 559 rooms and all have balconies. Ask for a room that faces the ocean where you have unobstructed views of Leblon and Ipanema. Several types of rooms and suites offer different amenities. Standard rooms have king or twin beds, cable TV, in-room safes, hair dryers and mini-bars. The hotel also has "Tower" rooms on the fourth floor. Larger and more luxurious, these rooms are furnished in cream shades set against the shiny dark Jacaranda (Brazilian rosewood) furniture. Tower guests check in on the fourth floor, where there is a comfortable lobby area and a private lounge for breakfast and cocktails. There is butler service as well. Newly renovated and redesigned for business travelers, "Smart" rooms are on upper floors. They have king-size beds, large desks with dataport connections, fax machines and printers. Non-smoking rooms are available in every room category.

Hotel amenities include a well-equipped fitness center and spa, a kid's program called "Sheratoons," a business center, 24-hour room service and English-speaking concierges. The fifth-floor **Mirador** restaurant

serves all meals and often has "food events." At the pool level is a charming *churrascaria* and a Brazilian eatery in what was once a fisherman's hut. The lobby bar serves great *caipirinhas* and has live music. It draws non-guests as well.

Breakfast is not included in room rate except for Tower room guests.

The Sheraton is just five minutes from Leblon (10 from São Conrado), but walking is not advisable. Take advantage of the lobby car service or the waiting taxis. And, although a free shuttle service runs to nearby shopping centers, it is not always available.

INTERCONTINENTAL RIO
Av. Prefeito Mendes de Morais 222, São Conrado
☎ (21) 3323-2200
www.rio-de-janeiro.brazil.intercontinental.com
Deluxe

As Rio expanded beyond Leblon and Lagoa, a new set of tunnels led to undeveloped but pristine beach areas. The first of these, São Conrado, a small community that joins Leblon to Barra, is largely residential today but was at first envisioned as a jet-set playground. Two deluxe hotels, country clubs, golf courses and one of the city's finest shopping centers were built. The Intercontinental Rio, one of those hotels (the other closed), is as close to a self-contained resort as there is in the city. With few immediate neighbors, the hotel has spa-

© Copacabana Palace Hotel

cious grounds that are well tended and flowered. There are three pools and two tennis courts on the property, while São Conrado Beach is just across the road. The Gávea Golf Club nearby offers hotel guests a reduced rate. The hotel's health club and sauna is open 24 hours a day. You can arrange for spa services. A jogging trail leads from the hotel and along the beach.

The hotel was remodeled in 2004 and the public areas and rooms have contemporary furniture with warm fabrics and subtle lighting. There are fresh flowers and comfortable couches in the lobby. Everything combines to give the hotel a warm, inviting ambience. There are over 300 guest rooms, with standard rooms on lower floors and deluxe and superior rooms on floors 4 through 24. Nonsmoking rooms, rooms with ocean views and suites are available. Executive rooms, called Club Intercontinental, are on the 15th and 17th floors. Breakfast, afternoon tea and complimentary cocktails are served in a private lounge. The 20 poolside rooms (cabanas) are great for kids but lack some privacy.

A very nice touch in every Intercontinental room is the colorful and original tapestry made by a Brazilian artist. You might like to buy one. We did.

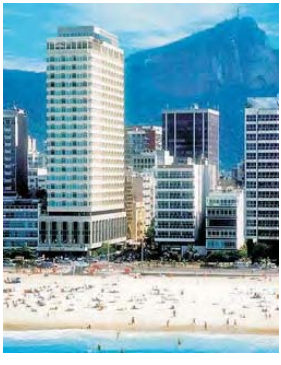
Hotel-wide facilities include a full business center, beauty salon, mini-bars and safes, 24-hour room service, wi-fi and a small but select shopping arcade. Food options include **Alfredo di Roma** on the ground floor, which serves good Italian dinners from 7 pm

nightly. Piano music adds to the enjoyment. Less formal is the hotel's main dining room. A veranda offers a breakfast buffet (included in room rate) and à la carte lunches and dinners. Poolside is **Cap't Cook Sea House**, which serves Brazilian foods and the usual poolside fare. **Cozinho Expres** is a snack bar that looks like a 50s diner. There are bars in the lobby and at the pool.

The São Conrado Fashion Mall, a short stroll away, is one of the city's best shopping centers. It has eating spots and cinemas too. The Intercontinental is a nice stop.

CAESAR PARK
Av. Vieira Souto 460, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2525-2525
www.caesarpark-rio.com
Deluxe

With a terrific location on Ipanema's beachfront and an easy stroll to the city's best shops and gourmet restaurants, Caesar Park is among the city's most luxurious and popular stops. Guests, many of whom return frequently, include business travelers, celebrities and heads of state. It's part of a small Brazilian chain, and management has been diligent about maintaining the highest standards – they recently upgraded all the guest rooms, replacing mattresses,


© Caesar Park

carpets and furniture. Rooms are now furnished in cooling cream fabrics and light woods. Bathrooms too have been refurbished. There are 220 rooms and suites and all are spacious, with such amenities as dataport access, in-room safes and minibars. Deluxe rooms and suites face the ocean, while standard and superior rooms face city streets.

Service is impeccable, with a staff that has worked here for long periods of time. Hotel facilities include a health club and small roof-top pool and sundeck, which offers amazing views. A fleet of bicycles is maintained for guest use. The beach here is lovely so guests often take advantage of Caesar Park's beach service that includes a lifeguard and beach gear. There is a business center with secretarial services, fax machines and computers.

Caesar Park is in walking distance of some of Rio's best restaurants and night clubs.

The **Galani Restaurant** serves Italian specialties primarily, but is known for its delicious *feijoada* on Saturdays. The **Dionisius Bar** is a comfortable meeting spot.

MARRIOTT RIO DE JANEIRO
Av. Atlântica 2600, Copacabana
☎ (21) 22-54-6500
www.marriott.com
Deluxe

An alternate site, www.marriottbrasil.com, is in Portuguese only.

Copacabana's newest deluxe hotel is striking because it is so different from all the other hotels. It stands taller than the buildings adjacent to it and its architecture is contemporary – almost avant garde. The façade is virtually all-glass and a multi-story atrium rises from the lobby. The sunlight streaming

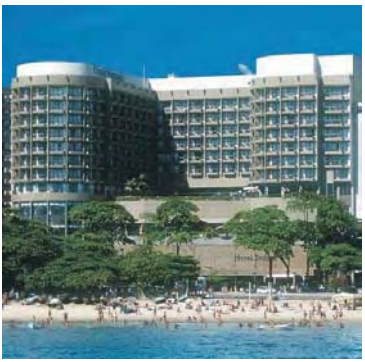
through the windows give a bright and airy feel. Perhaps because the atrium uses so much space, the 245 guest rooms and suites are a bit smaller here than those at comparable stops. But they do have all the same amenities, including CD players, cable TV, safes large enough to hold a laptop and dataports. The 60 Executive rooms include access to the private ninth-floor Executive Lounge, where breakfast is served. All rooms have either ocean or atrium views, with those facing the water costing more. The hotel itself is very guest-friendly. There are wheelchair friendly and non-smoking rooms.

© Marriott Hotels

There is a rooftop swimming pool and health club, cocktail lounge and a full business center. The Marriott also offers its guests beach service that includes chairs, towels, umbrellas, drinks and snacks at the beach strip fronting the hotel. Breakfast, which is included in rates, plus lunch and dinner are served in the larger **Terraneo Restaurant**, while the smaller eatery serves sushi. Views of the area from the roof are lovely, especially after dark when the Christ the Redeemer statue on Corcovado is illuminated.

SOFITEL RIO DE JANEIRO
Av. Atlântica 4240, Copacabana
☎ (21) 2525-1232
www.accorhotels.com
Deluxe

This imposing structure is located where Copacabana Beach melts into Arpoador and Ipanema. It's an elegant property with unusual architecture. Designed in the shape of an H, its two curved wings house 388 guestrooms and suites, all with balconies. The connecting halls house conference rooms, restaurants and shops. Views from those balconies and halls are stunning, taking in the entire sweep of Copacabana Beach with Copacabana Fort directly below. Formerly the Rio Palace, the French Sofitel chain undertook a vast renovation. They retained many of the Brazilian touches – such as authentic jacaranda furnishings, antiques and engravings – while upgrading and modernizing the guest rooms and hotel amenities. Superior rooms have partial ocean views, while deluxe rooms and suites all have full ocean views. Imperial Club rooms have a private lounge with a terrific multilingual library, a daily newspaper, afternoon tea and a great ocean view. All rooms have cable TV,



© Accor Hotels

mini-bars, small refrigerators, dataport access and in-room safes large enough to hold a laptop. There is a business center and health club. The hotel's two pools were also renovated and each gets sun at different times of the day, which makes tanning easy. Sofitel also provides complimentary beach service. The Sofitel's dining room, **Atlantis**, serves a buffet breakfast (included in room rate) plus à la carte lunch and dinner. **Le Pre Catalan**, one of Rio's most upscale French dining spots (see page 164), is in the hotel as well. **The Horse's Neck Bar** (see page 247) is a popular local watering hole and English pub. In an unusual arrangement, the lower levels of the building are occupied by the Shopping Cassino Atlántico, an upscale mall that specializes in antiques, art, home furnishings and accessories. The mall also sponsors an antiques fair in addition to the shops. Sat, 11 am-7 pm.

SHERATON BARRA HOTEL & SUITES
Av. Lucio Costa 3150, Barra da Tijuca
☎ (21) 3139-8000
www.sheraton.com/barra
Deluxe

Completed in 2003, the Sheraton Barra is a resort-style hotel in Rio's fastest-growing area. It is quite contemporary in appearance and very different from the hotels in the other beach communities. All 300 rooms and suites

© Starwood Hotels

are furnished with Sheraton's popular "Sweet Sleeper" beds. Rooms have balconies and many face Barra Beach, Rio's largest sand strip, directly across the wide thoroughfare. Other rooms overlook the hotel gardens and pool area. The grounds are beautifully maintained with lots of greenery and palm trees for shade. The irregularly shaped pool is at the heart of the complex. Encircled by a sundeck, it has a floating island and wooden bridges that lead from one side to the other. A smaller pool and playground are nearby for children.

© Starwood Hotels

Large guest rooms have white walls and contemporary furnishings using light woods, colorful fabrics, lots of polished chrome accents and skillful lighting that actually allows you to read in bed. Fresh flowers are complimentary and access to the Internet is available.

The fitness center features a glass wall so you can watch the social scene as you sweat. There are squash courts, hot tubs and a sauna too.

The hotel restaurant serves all meals and there is a popular bar and cocktail lounge. Barra is quite spread out and, as in US suburban areas, people drive from place to place

rather than walk. The hotel has parking (extra fee) and a waiting fleet of taxis. Restaurants, night spots and a great many shopping centers are just a few minutes away.

Breakfast is not included in rates at the Sheraton Barra.

MARINA ALL SUITES HOTEL
Av. Delfin Moreira 696, Leblon
☎ (21) 2172-1110
www.marinaallsuites.com.br
Deluxe

© Marina All Suites Hotel

A group of local architects and interior decorators joined forces to create this avant garde boutique hotel in a space that once housed a more traditional hotel. It makes for an intriguing stop and is just one of a handful of hotels in Leblon, near fine shops, restaurants and night spots. There are now only 38 suites where once there were twice that number, so all are spacious. Each suite (there are four layouts) is individually decorated with tropical fabrics, warm woods and original works of art. A few have showers rather than tubs, but all the bathrooms are equipped with hair dryers. There are one- and two-bedroom suites; the one-bedroom suites have sleeping sofas in the living room. All have American kitchens complete with microwaves, coffee makers and refrigerators. There is a well-equipped fitness center and sauna (you can arrange for a massage), a game room, a roof-top

Marina All Suites is an excellent option for families with young children and those staying long-term.

lounge with Internet access and a DVD theater. There are terrific views of Leblon Beach from the pool, which has hydro-massage jets. The **Bar d'Hotel** is both a French restaurant and a popular night spot. Very civilized.

WINDSOR BARRA HOTEL
Av. Sernambetiba 2630, Barra da Tijuca
☎ (21) 2195-5000
www.windsorhotels.com.br
Deluxe

This jewel in the Windsor Chain opened in 2005 and is the newest deluxe hotel in the burgeoning Barra section of Rio. While guests here will need taxis to visit Centro and the other beach communities, Barra has its own charms. It has a growing number of restaurants and many are sister eateries of the city's finest. There are several golf courses in the area and Barra Beach is the longest strip in the city. Over a half-dozen shopping centers are also here. There are 338 units, of which 40 are suites. Rooms are furnished with king or double beds, comfortable barrel chairs and plenty of desk space. The gold- and rust-colored fabrics complement the light woods and the built-in units that hold the entertainment center and mini-bar. Oversized soundproof windows face across

© Windsor Hotels

Av. Sernambetiba to Barra Beach or the surrounding streets. Bathrooms are quite large.

The Windsor Barra is a popular convention choice. It has meeting rooms and an adjacent convention center. That explains why the main restaurant can seat 500 people for buffet breakfast and lunch. There is à la carte service too. You might prefer the nearby piano bar and intimate restaurant that only seats 70 people. The sleek lobby is huge, with sitting areas delineated by leather couches and chairs and marble-topped tables. The two pools (one for children) on the 17th floor roof are heated in cool weather. There is a bar here as well. Other facilities include a fitness center with a Jacuzzi and sauna, and a first-rate business center with a wi-fi system, printers, copiers and fax machines. The hotel offers guests beach service and it is located near Pepe Beach with the city's most popular food and rental kiosk.

The Windsor Barra, set between the sea and Tijuca Forest, offers a different face of Rio.

© Windsor Hotels

PESTANA RIO ATLÂNTICA
Av. Atlântica 2964, Copacabana
☎ (21) 2548-6332
www.pestanahotels.com.br
Expensive

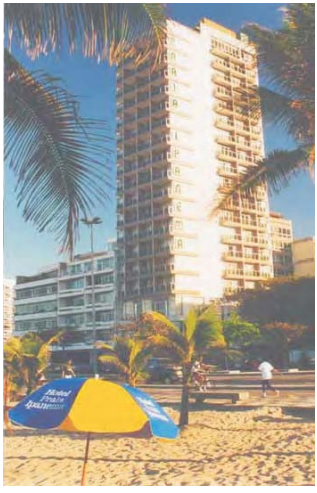
The Pestana Rio Atlântica is a perfect base for exploring Copacabana and the rest of Rio. Formerly a stodgy all-suite stop, the hotel was taken over by a new management group,

Pestana Hotels and Resorts, who have changed the hotel both literally and figuratively. There are 217 guest rooms, but now only half are suites. The less expensive standard and superior rooms and even some suites face Leme and Posto 6, site of beach soccer and volleyball games. Deluxe suites have full Copacabana Beach views. Since all rooms have terraces, you can relax on yours and watch the sun set over the water. Refurbished rooms offer oversized well-stocked bathrooms, cable TV, mini-bars and in-room safes. Younger guests are drawn to the roof-top pool and Jacuzzi, as well as the deck bar which closes at 10 pm. There are views of the mountains as well. The hotel provides beach service that includes chairs, towels and soft drinks. The upgraded health club has a sauna and you can arrange for a massage. The new business center has computers, Internet access, scanners and secretarial services. The **Cais da Ribeira Restaurant**, in the lobby, is where breakfast is served (included in room rate) and the dinner menu features Portuguese specialties. The **Lobby Bar**, the hotel's other social center, is open till 1 am and has live music.

© Pestana Hotels

HOTEL PRAIA IPANEMA
Av. Vieira Souto 706, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2540-4949
www.praiaipanema.com
Expensive

There's no hotel in the city with a better location than the Praia Ipanema. It is one of a handful of hotels on Av. Vieira Souto, Ipanema's beachfront street, and an easy stroll to Leblon and Lagoa. While not a deluxe option, it has many deluxe amenities and, with only 103 units, it is a place where the staff gets to know each guest. Your best bet here is one of the 55 deluxe rooms, recently refurbished and now with balconies facing Ipanema Beach. If you get a room on an upper floor, the views are stunning. The standard rooms are on lower floors and their balconies have only a partial ocean view. There are gradations within each category as well. Furnishings resemble those in Scandinavian hotels, with light teak woods, built-in headboards and white bedspreads. The effect is light and uncluttered. All rooms have cable TV, VCR, mini-bars, safes and hair dryers. The hotel's pool is on the roof and beach service is pro-



© Praia Ipanema Hotel

vided for guests. The gym is small but adequate and it has a sauna. There is a business center as well. **La Mouette Restaurant** serves a breakfast buffet (included in the rate) and lunch and dinner, but keep in mind the Praia Ipanema is in the heart of Ipanema's restaurant and night spot action, so you will want to explore.

IPANEMA PLAZA
Rua Farme de Amoedo 34
Ipanema
☎ (21) 3687-2000
www.ipanemaplazahotel.com
Expensive

Opened for only a half-dozen years, the Ipanema Plaza has already made a name for itself. The Golden Tulip hotel group is based in Holland and the hotel is quite European in both appearance and service. While many of Rio's hotels were built in the 1950s and 1960s and often have Art Deco façades, this hotel is modern and sleek, with golden woods, beige fabrics and tile floors. There are 135 units ranging from standard to deluxe, including 18 suites with large terraces and ocean views. There is a variety of perks within each classification as well. The deluxe rooms are your best bet, for many have terraces and king-size beds. A recent addition to the hotel

The Ipanema Plaza a member of the Golden Tulip Hotel Group.

© Golden Tulip Hotel Group

is the Ipanema Floor, the executive floor. Rooms here have oversized TV sets, DVDs and Jacuzzis. All rooms have dataports, TV sets, mini-bars, safes and hair dryers. There is a small gym and a rooftop pool with views of the ocean, the lagoon and Corcovado. The hotel offers beach service for guests. The complimentary breakfast buffet is served in the **Chez Pierre Restaurant**. The Ipanema Plaza is only one block from the beach. It is set on a street with clubs and restaurants that draw largely gay clientele. They stay open late, so ask for a room on an upper floor.

LE MERIDIEN COPACABANA
Av. Atlântica 1020, Copacabana (Leme)
☎ (21) 3873-8888
www.starwoodhotels.com/lemeridien
Expensive

© Starwood Hotels

Although it is now a Starwood Hotel, Le Meridien was for many years managed by French hoteliers and the elegant public areas still reflect European savoir faire. Some 37 stories high, Le Meridien towers above its neighbors and most of its nearly 500 rooms and suites offer unsurpassed views of Copacabana Beach or Corcovado Mountain. In fact, every superior room (floors 9-24) and deluxe room (floors

25-36) offers them. These rooms are larger than standard rooms but all have modern furnishings with lots of amenities such as cable TV, mini-bars, in-room safes and international direct dial phones. Because of its location close to Rio's commercial center, Le Meridien was very popular with business travelers and it maintains a state-of-the art business center. Lots of international companies hold conferences; the property has over 20 meeting rooms. There is an outdoor pool, a fitness center and sauna. Massages are available too.

In keeping with its French roots, Le Meridien is home to **Le Saint Honoré**, one of the city's gourmet French restaurants (see *Best Places to Dine*). Under the supervision of chef Paul Bocuse, it is on the 37th floor and often features jazz. **Café Fleuri**, on the fourth floor, is the hotel's less formal dining room. Breakfast, included in room rates, is served here. Mediterranean and Brazilian favorites are offered for lunch and dinner. There is a casual bar here as well as a piano bar in the lobby.

MARINA PALACE HOTEL
Av. Delfin Moreira 630, Leblon
☎ (21) 2172-1000
www.marinapalacehotel.com
Expensive

A more traditional stop than the Marina Suites, the Marina Palace is part of the same Marina Hotel Group. You can stroll from one to the other easily. The Marina Palace's 20-story tower has 150 rooms and suites, all with great views of the city. Views include Leblon Beach, the Lagoa, Gávea Rock on São

© Marina Palace Hotel

Conrado Beach and Corcovado. Head to the rooftop pool for a view of all of them. Rooms are spacious, with comfortable furnishings, cable TV, mini-bars, telephones with voice mail, in-room safes and large well-stocked bathrooms. The Marina Palace is very popular with business travelers and there are five executive floors. Recently renovated, they have data ports and other useful items. Guests can also head to the business center, where there is Internet access as well as copiers and fax machines. There is a fitness center and a sauna. Breakfast (not included in room rate) is served at the **Azulino Restaurant** on the second floor. Its dinner menu features fusion cuisine.

LUXOR REGENTE
Av. Atlântica 3716, Copacabana
☎ (21) 2525-2070
www.luxor-hotels.com/regente
Moderate

There are several Luxor hotels in Rio, but we like the Regente best. From the street, the hotel looks dark and uninviting because they've used dark glass on the façade. Built in the 1960s, the hotel was badly worn by the time the major renovation undertaken by Luxor came. It's easy to spot the newly designed lobby and modern furniture in the other public areas, but friends tell us that

© Luxor Hotels

Standard and superior rooms have city views, so ask for a room on a higher floor of the Luxor Regente.

new elevators were installed and new equipment was added to the small gym. There are 228 rooms and seven suites (five are Executive with extras for business travelers) and all have been remodeled and refurbished. All the rooms are spacious; most have showers rather than bathtubs. The suites and some deluxe rooms have tubs and ocean views as well.

The service at the Luxor Regente is top-notch.

All rooms have data ports, mini-bars, refrigerators, safes and hair dryers. As a result of the renovation, three floors of the hotel have been designated as non-smoking. These rooms and foyers have tile floors rather than carpeting. The pool is on the roof, along with a snack bar. The health club has new workout machines and a sauna. The hotel provides beach service for guests who prefer to sun on the sand. The **Forno e Fogão** restaurant serves breakfast (included in rate) and international dishes for lunch and dinner, but is best known for its *feijoada*. There is a casual lobby bar as well.

© Luxor Hotels

ARPOADOR INN
Rua Francisco Otaviano 177, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2523-0060
www.ipanema.com (search by hotel listings)
Moderate

© Arpoador Inn

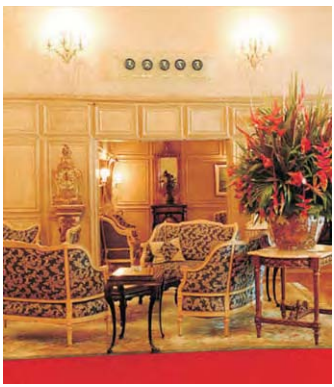
Arpoador Inn is a small, modest hotel with a great location and friendly atmosphere. It stands by Arpoador Beach, just beyond Copacabana and near Copacabana Fort. The small beach here is considered the city's best for surfing and it is lighted so enthusiasts can ride waves into the night. The beach street, Rua Francisco Bhering, is closed to vehicular traffic so it is rather quiet but for the waves and surfers. A six-floor building, the inn has 50 rooms with color TVs, in-room safes and small refrigerators. They have been refurbished since the hotel was built in 1974. Deluxe rooms face the beach (rear), while superior rooms face the beach promenade. Standard rooms are quite small and look out on an interior wall of the hotel, so they are dark. The **Azul Marinho** ground-floor restaurant is where the breakfast buffet is served. Lunch and dinner are also available, but you are an easy stroll from fine restaurants. Breakfast is included in the room rate. While the hotel is not overflowing

with creature comforts, you can't beat the location and price.

GLÓRIA
Rua do Russel 632, Glória
☎ (21) 2555-7272
www.hotelgloriario.com.br
Moderate

For many years, the Glória was Rio's classiest stop. Traditionally, it was where the Henry Kissingers of the world stayed and where scores of international conference were held. And why not? Built in 1922 (a year before the Copacabana Palace) it was inaugurated by the Brazilian president and was to provide luxurious accommodations for international guests attending Brazil's centennial events. Located on the sweep of Guanabara Bay, it offers views of Sugar Loaf and Flamengo Park but, alas, it is not on a beach. It does, however, have lovely gardens and two heated pools. The public areas are old-world beautiful with formal brocaded sofas and chairs, carved-legged tables and ornate mirrors. Guest rooms (there are 630 rooms and suites) have antique touches but the infrastructure and amenities are all contemporary. Rooms in the annex, which was added in the 1970s, are smaller but similar

The Glória is quite close to the city's commercial center and the Glória Metrô stop.



© Gloria Hotel

in décor. There is a business center, a fitness center and several restaurants; breakfast is included in the room rate. It is just a few minutes from the Glória Marina, where city-cruise ships dock and, since Guanabara Bay is often polluted, guests head to beaches in Leme and Copacabana.

EXCELSIOR COPACABANA
Av. Atlântica 1800, Copacabana
☎ (21) 2195-5800
www.windsorhoteis.com/en-us/
Moderate

Another of our choices in the Windsor group, the Excelsior is not an architectural gem but rather a boxy tower, yet it stands out because of its eye-catching blue and white façade. It also offers first-rate service and amenities and a great Copacabana address.

© Windsor Hotel Group

The Excelsior was recently voted the best "superior" hotel in Brazil.

Although it was built in the 1950s, the Excelsior has been remodeled and renovated to be sleek and contemporary – something you'll notice immediately as you enter the marble-filled lobby. There are 230 rooms and three suites. Deluxe rooms face the ocean, while standard and superior rooms have partial water views. Furnishings are contemporary, with gold

tones, jacaranda woods and built-in TVs. The suites are larger and each has a Jacuzzi and sauna. All rooms have data ports, minibars, private safes and hair dryers that are included in the well-stocked bathrooms.

© Windsor Hotel Group

There are nonsmoking floors and some wheelchair-accessible rooms. A business center has computers, copiers and faxes – all are free to guests. Breakfast (included in rate) is a sumptuous buffet served in the hotel's restaurant. A la carte breakfast can be served in guest rooms. The lunch buffet is so popular that Cariocas working nearby often head here. On the roof is a pool and casual snack bar. There is a health club and sauna.

MIRAMAR PALACE
Av. Atlântica 3668
Copacabana
☎ (21) 2195-6200
www.windsorhoteis.com/en-us/
Moderate

Part of the Windsor Hotel Group (as are several of our other choices), the Miramar Palace is a narrow white structure in the heart of Copacabana Beach. Its 15 floors house 156 rooms and suites, while the roof-

© Windsor Hotel Group

top pool area (16th floor) has great views of the beach, a sundeck and a casual bar. The lobby, which features another bar, the restaurant and other public areas have old-world charm, with marble floors and spectacular glass chandeliers.

© Windsor Hotel Group

Rooms are larger here than in comparable hotels and they have been renovated recently. Furnishings are contemporary, with tropical colors and blond woods. The hotel is on a corner facing the beach and many rooms have ocean views – albeit partial ones. Standard rooms (floors 4-13) and the superior rooms (floors 14 and 15) are the same size, but the superior rooms have terraces, which are a great perk. There are a handful of business rooms with fax machines and computers, and there is also a business center. Suites – all corner rooms – are particularly nice. The hotel has a fitness center and sauna, some non-smoking rooms and some that are wheelchair accessible. The **Ancoradouro Restaurant**, a casual eatery with windows facing the beach, serves all meals, including a full breakfast buffet, which is included in your rate.

EVEREST RIO HOTEL
Rua Prudente de Moraes 1117, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2525-2200
www.everest.com.br
Moderate

© Everest Rio Hotel

The Everest Rio reminds us of the adage "don't judge a book by its cover." The hotel's façade is not particularly impressive, but the pleasant surprise is that the public areas and guest rooms, having undergone a recent renovation, are quite contemporary and attractive. There are 156 rooms and almost 100 are standard. They are good size with built in headboards, a desk, a big closet and a small table with comfortable chairs. The 50 deluxe rooms are similar but have queen-size, rather than double, beds. Ask for a room on an upper floor so you look out at either the beach or the mountains and Lagoa. The latter is special at night. There are only nine executive suites. If you can swing it on your budget, we think they are a worthwile splurge. The walls are pale yellow, giving the rooms a light, airy look. There are separate living rooms and luxurious bathrooms. All rooms have mini-bars, TVs, data ports, refrigerators and in-room safes.

Although not luxurious, Everest Rio is quite comfortable and near Ipanema shops and restaurants.

Rising 23 stories above a primarily residential street the Everest Rio is just a block from Ipanema Beach but that short walk is enough to push the rates down. The hotel's

facilities and amenities are comparable to more expensive options. There is a roof-top pool and bar offering great views. The **360° Restaurant** is on the 23rd floor. The breakfast buffet is served here (included in rate), as are lunch and dinner. Specialties are chargrilled meats and fish. There is a Japanese restaurant in the lobby. The hotel has a business center and 24-hour room service.

EVEREST PARK HOTEL
Rua Maria Quitéria 19, Ipanema
☎ (21) 2525-2200
www.everest.com.br
Moderate

A sister hotel to the Everest Rio, the Park is quite small, with only 25 units – some with terraces that offer a peek at the beach. Rooms were designed for business travelers and have Internet access, data ports, ample desk space, and good lighting. They are spacious and have twin beds that can be connected to form a double bed. The furniture is functional. Bathrooms have large tubs, bright mirrors and hair dryers. Standard amenities include mini-bars, refrigerators, safes and TV sets. The breakfast buffet is outstanding, with lots of fresh fruits, meats, cheeses and breads. It is served from 6:30 am to 10:30 am in the **Café au Lait** and is included in room rates. A la carte breakfasts and room service are available, but the café does not serve lunch or dinner. Guests here can use the pool and business center at the Everest Rio right around the corner. The Everest Park has an Ipanema address and is in the heart of Rio's best shopping and dining area, but it doesn't offer much pizzazz.

HOTEL FLORIDA
Rua Ferreira Viana 81, Flamengo
☎ (21) 2195-6800
www.windsorhoteis.com/en-us/
Moderate

This is primarily a stop for business travelers because it is only five minutes from the downtown commercial center and virtually atop the Catete Metrô stop. The Florida combines the courtliness of old-world Rio with modern facilities. Many Brazilian businessmen make it their base because it offers free parking, free local phone calls and free Internet access. Although it was built in the 1940s, the Windsor Hotel Group has renovated and refurbished it. The 225 rooms are larger than most, with marble floors or new carpets and modern if unremarkable furnishings. Rooms have the same amenities as more expensive hotels, with cable TV, private safes, mini-bars and refrigerators. Standard rooms have no views and have only showers, but for just a bit more money you can stay in a superior or deluxe room. The best views are those facing the lovely gardens of the Palacio do Catete, which was once the presidential palace. Deluxe rooms have king-size beds.

© Windsor Hotel Group

There are non-smoking floors. The Florida has a pool, a bar and a sundeck on its roof. From the roof there is a magnificent view of the gardens at nearby Flamengo Park, which features jogging trails and tennis courts. The Florida has a small workout center with a sauna and a busy business center. Flamengo's beach is on Guanabara Bay, so it is not for swimmers. Breakfast is served in the hotel's restaurant and is included in the room rate. Flamengo is primarily a residential area and there are restaurants nearby. The metrô can get you to the beach in Copacabana or to that community's restaurants and nightspots quickly.

© Windsor Hotel Group

DAYRELL OURO VERDE
Av. Atlântica 1456, Copacabana
☎ (21) 2543-4123
www.dayrell.com.br/english/
Inexpensive

© Dayrell Hotel Group

The Ouro Verde is faded but not a bad choice if you want to stay on Copacabana Beach.

Another old timer that still has charm and spacious rooms – many with balconies – the Ouro Verde was built to house visitors arriving for the 1950 World Cup. The façade retains many of its French-inspired Art Deco features. When we first

stayed here in the 1960s, it was under Swiss management and the old-world charm included white-gloved elevator operators. Times change and the Ouro Verde is now part of the Dayrell (formerly Grandarrell) Hotel Group.

© Dayrell Hotel Group

Its 63 rooms and single suite are spread around 15 floors. "Around" is the operative word, since the rooms face a circular central foyer. Natural light streams in through skylights, making the hotel bright and airy. A white wrought rail encircles the foyer. Halls have dated furniture, but are accented with works of art and fresh flowers. The lobby looks much as it did years ago, with plush covered chairs and sofas, hanging chandeliers, and crystal sconces. The check-in areas have been updated and are quite modern. The staff is helpful and knowledgeable. Accommodations include deluxe rooms on the upper floors with balconies facing the beach. Room furnishings have a well used look, but the bathrooms have been updated. The **Ouro Verde** restaurant looks out at the beach. Breakfast is served here (included in rate), as is lunch and dinner. There is also a coffee shop in the garden area of the hotel.

LONG-TERM STAYS

If you are staying in Rio for a substantial period of time while working or studying, you might prefer to stay in a furnished apartment rather than a hotel. Some options follow:

PARTHENON ARPOADOR
Rua Francisco Otaviano 61, Arpoador
☎ (21) 3222-9603
www.accorhotels.com
Moderate

Only three years old, this is an excellent choice. It has 27 apartments, some of which are non-smoking. The apartments are air-conditioned, have safes, full kitchens, a mini-bar, color TV and Internet access, as well as showers and tubs. There is a swimming pool, fitness center and sauna. Thirteen suites in the complex are more like hotel rooms.

Arpoador Beach is the surfing area between Copacabana & Ipanema.

LEBLON FLAT SERVICE
Rua Professor Antônio Maria Teixeira 33
Leblon
☎ 55-21-2239-4598
www.redeprotel.com (Portuguese only)
Inexpensive

Apartments here are small and comfortable, with one or two bedrooms and balconies. There are 120 apartments, all with kitchens. The complex has laundry facilities, a coffee shop, pool and gym. It is not far from Leblon Beach.

BARRABELLA
Av. Sernambetiba 4700, Barra
☎ (21) 2196-2810
www.redeprotel.com (Portuguese only)
Inexpensive.

These one- and two-bedroom apartments are set in a tower building facing Barra's beach. There's a coffee shop, gym, pool and sauna.

Rio After Dark

Not for nothing is Rio known as the party capital of South America. Brazilians know how to party and the city's sultry nights are filled with the sounds of music and laughter. Music is so much a part of life here that it is virtually impossible to find a spot where there is none.

There are huge concert halls seating several thousand people where both Brazilian and international artists perform regularly.

The Rolling Stones once gave an impromptu performance on Copacabana Beach.

There are scores of clubs with live bands and crowded dance floors where patrons move to the beat of samba, bossa nova and forró. While those clubs in the beach communities are sleek and modern, several of those downtown, called *gafieiras*, were built in the 1930s. Refurbished but not modernized, they are in vogue today. Some clubs are known for one style of music while others feature several styles, each on its own night.

THE MUSIC

While bossa nova and samba are well known in the US, some other Brazilian music is largely unknown. **Choro** music is played on banjos (called *cavaquinhos*), guitars, flutes and tambourines (*pandeiros*). It's akin to rag-time with a samba rhythm. **Forró** is a music style that began in Brazil's northeast-

ern states during WWII. GIs stationed in Brazil opened the clubs on base "for all," which Brazilians pronounced *forró*. *Gafieira* refers to a dance hall, but also to a style of music with an African beat brought to Brazil by slaves and blended with music from other South American countries.

Cariocas swing to **MBP**, Musica Popular Brasileira, the term for popular music such as rock, at *danceterias* (discos), while other clubs and restaurants offer live blues, jazz and piano music virtually every night. Some popular spots have a ground-floor restaurant and an upper level club.

SAMBA SHOWS

If you are neither Fred nor Ginger and prefer to watch great dancing, head to one of the clubs that offer elaborate samba shows. True, tour buses will be parked in front, but unless you are in Rio for pre-Carnaval or Carnaval events, these performances are your best chance to see the samba routines and outrageous costumes that are Carnaval's hallmarks.

The range of clubs is enormous – from semi-formal supper clubs, to *danceterias* (discos), to single bars, gay and lesbian hangouts, British and Irish pubs and clubs that cater to single men.

BEYOND THE CLUBS

If you aren't a club-goer, you still have broad options. The **Teatro Municipal** has performances year-round. Opera, ballet, classical

concerts and plays are offered here as well as in cultural centers set in stunning colonial-era buildings that were once banks and mansions. **Films** are shown in their original language with Portuguese subtitles, so if you notice a US or British film you missed, you can enjoy it here. Theater productions and comedy performances are in Portuguese.

Don't forget to check for **soccer matches** at Maracaná Stadium during your visit. International teams (many with Brazilian stars) play here often. A visit to a Terreiro to witness a Candomblé or Umbanda ceremony is an experience you'll always remember.

NIGHTLIFE 101

There is no kick-off or turn-out-the-lights time. Dinner isn't in full swing till 9 pm and most clubs don't open till 11 pm. They usually remain open till the last person leaves – often 4 am weekends.

Clubs have either an entrance fee or a drink minimum. The charge in reais is usually about US $10-20 for ladies and US $5 more for men. Each patron receives a card upon entry. Drinks are recorded on the card and payment is made based on it as you leave. Be sure not to misplace your card since the forfeit charge can be US $100.

NOTE: The drinking age in Brazil is 18.

We've saved the best nighttime option for last. Simply hanging out while clutching an ice-cold beer or *caipirinha* is what most Cariocas do each night. They gather at

botecos (bars), *botequim* (taverns) and *choperias* (pubs) to drink, enjoy Brazilian-style finger foods, listen to music, meet friends or make new ones, and generally enjoy life. These places are located throughout the city, and are most prevalent along the streets of Copacabana, Ipanema and Leblon, around the Lagoa and in the Lapa area of downtown. They have indoor tables but those outdoors are most coveted. You can't miss seeing or hearing them. Some are so popular that it is impossible to get a table after 10 pm, so follow Carioca fashion and have a drink on the sidewalk nearby where other groups will gather. Virtually all Cariocas under age 40 speak some English and are very friendly. Many have studied at US colleges or have visited family stateside.

Bars regularly open for Happy Hour in early afternoon to catch the crowds leaving the beach and they remain lively till the early morning hours. Some open for lunch.

THE SLEEP FACTOR

You are probably thinking, as we have, "How do they do it?" "When do they sleep?" The answer is late afternoon or early evening naps. Try it if you want to party.

DRESS

The dress code varies at night spots just as it does at restaurants. Cariocas dress up at night. In theaters, concert venues and dance clubs, men wear trendy resort wear and chic

attire. Many clubs deny entry to those in shorts, T-shirts or sneakers. You can wear shorts and T-shirts at the local bars, but even there, grunge is out.

NOTE: Although many of the clubs we'll list have been open for years, others create a stir that lasts only a short time before burning out. We have personally visited every listing in this guide, but experience shows that a few spots will be closed when you visit. Check with your hotel concierge before setting out.

EVENT LISTINGS

For listings of events, the entertainment sections in Friday's *O Globo* and *Jornal do Brasil* are excellent resources (Portuguese). Another resource is *This Month in Rio*, which has event schedules and should be available at your hotel. Hotel concierges can also help.

WARNING: It bears repeating that you should not wear jewelry or carry large sums of cash at any time, but especially at night. If you head to Lapa and downtown, stick to the main streets that are lit and have revelers on them. Ask the club to call a taxi for you if none is waiting when you leave. Even in the beach communities, stick to the main streets. Use the same good common sense you would use in any US city that is unfamiliar to you.

NIGHT LIFE CENTERS

Most of you will have dinner and then head to a club to listen to music or to dance. But for those who like to move from one place to another easily at night, there are three clusters of spots to explore.

Lapa

The largest is Lapa, a funky section of downtown that is akin to New York's Greenwich Village. In the 1930s and 1940s, its small restaurants, bars and shops were hangouts for the city's writers and artists. There were some beautiful mansions in the area, which is an easy walk to Rio's financial centers. But by the 1960s, the area had faded badly. Restaurants closed and were replaced by seedy bars and Lapa became known as Rio's red light district. Fortunately, Carioca entrepreneurs stepped in, buying up the mansions and refurbishing them. Old clubs were renovated and new ones added. Lapa is once again hot, with old *gafieiras* (dance halls), theaters and restaurants. The key streets are Rua do Lavradio and Av. Mem de Sá. They are adjacent to the Metropolitan Cathedral. On Friday nights, streets in the area are closed to vehicular traffic and restaurants put tables out on the street. Popular spots include **Rio Scenarium**, **Carioca da Gema**, **Asa Branca** and **Centro Cultural Carioca**. We'll detail these and others in the sections that follow.

Arco de Teles

Also downtown, near Praça Novembro 15, is the Arco do Teles, which we previously described in *Exploring Centro*, page 102. The Arch connects two two-story colonial houses. They and scores of other houses have been restored and line the Travesa do Comércio, a busy street. After work hours, particularly on Thursday and Friday evenings, the *botecos* and *botequims* place their chairs outside, creating a large patio of eating and drinking spots. There is also live music. It's a great spot to relax and kick-back an ice cold *choppe*.

> **WARNING:** Since the businesses in the area close at 1 pm Saturdays and are closed on Sunday, this area is quiet weekends – so avoid it.

Rua Paul Redfern

Rua Paul Redfern is an innocuous two-block street that starts on Av. Vieira Souto (beachfront) and ends at Rua Visconde de Pirajá in Ipanema. It abuts the Jardim de Alah canal that divides Ipanema and Leblon. Incredibly, those two short blocks are home to several restaurants, several nightclubs including a popular gay club, an English pub and a terrific wine emporium. The area is quiet during the day, but it comes to life at night. Osteria dell'Angolo is an attractive Italian restaurant and a Guimas Pizzeria is nearby. Lord Jim Pub is an institution here and its neighbor,

The Santa Rosa Lounge, is a good spot to hear live music.

NIGHT CLUBS & MUSIC

The night spots that follow are a mix of discos and clubs with live music, many of which have dance floors too. We've selected places that we've enjoyed and that have remained popular for years, as well as some "in" places recommended by Carioca friends. But there are hundreds more that you'll discover during your visit.

You'll notice several listings for clubs in Lapa, which has become a center of nightlife (see above). Here you'll find the *gafieiras*, old-fashioned dance halls. The regulars are skilled dancers, dressed for the part and enjoy being watched. *Gafieiras* are akin to the tango clubs of Buenos Aires. The discos draw younger crowds than those with live music. Dress is casual chic.

ASA BRANCA

A large club housed in a funky restored mansion. Live bands play traditional Brazilian music. Samba, *choro* and *forró* are featured on different nights. Check schedules. Open Wed-Sun, from 10 pm. Av. Mem de Sá 17, Lapa. ☎ (21) 2224-2342

00 (ZERO ZERO)

Modeled on a European lounge, 00 is one of the hippest clubs in the city. The *danceteria* (disco) doesn't get going till 11 pm, but lots of people show up at 8 pm to eat in the restaurant or sushi bar. Each DJ here specializes

in a style of music and they alternate throughout the evening. Lots of gays party here too. Open nightly. Planetário da Gávea, Av. Padre Leonel Franca 240, Gávea. ☎ (21) 2540-8041.

VINÍCIUS SHOW BAR

This small dimly lit club is on the second floor of a building on Vinícius St. (Garota de Ipanema is across the street). There are only a dozen tables and a small bar area, but the bandstand features some of the city's best bossa nova groups. Samba is featured on other nights. Music starts at 9:30 pm. Open nightly. Rua Vinícius de Moraes 39, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2287-1497.

MANGUE SECO CACHAÇARIA

A newcomer to Lapa, this restaurant/*cachaça* bar has become a local hangout. The ground-floor restaurant serves excellent seafood with crab dishes as specialties. The second level *cachaça* bar opens at 8 pm (10 pm on weekends) and serves over 100 different brands of Brazilian rum from 10 different states. Live music. Open Mon-Thurs, 8 pm, Fri-Sat, 10 pm; closed Sun. Rua do Lavradio 23, Lapa. ☎ (21) 3852-1947.

MISTURA FINA

Mistura Fina houses a Brazilian restaurant on its first floor and an intimate piano bar/lounge on its second level. Most often the music is jazz and the musicians are some of Brazil's best. Have a drink on the verandah that faces the Lagoa. It's lovely. Music from

8 pm; closed Tues. Av. Borges de Medeiros 3207, Lagoa. ☎ (21) 2537-2844.

BARONNETI

A lovely bi-level townhouse on an attractive street in Ipanema is home to a bar and lounge on the first level and a nightclub on the second. It draws an upscale crowd and the disco has dim lighting and comfortable couches. Open Tues-Sun, 10:30 pm; closed Mon. Rua Barão da Torre 354, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2247-9100.

ESTUDANTINA CAFÉ CULTURAL

Founded in 1932, Estudantina is Rio's oldest *gafieira* (dance hall). Incredibly popular, its dance floor often is filled by 1,500 dancers. Reserve a table so you can watch the regulars samba. Live 10-piece band. Open Thurs, 8 pm, Fri-Sat, 10 pm. Praça Tiradentes 79, Centro. ☎ (21) 2232-1149.

RIO SCENARIUM

Housed in a restored 1880s townhouse, this is both an antique center and a club. The antiques are sold and are often used as props in movies. Tables are set around the dance floor and stage. Rio Scenarium is huge, and it often holds 3,000 patrons. It offers live bands that play samba, *choro*, *gafieira* and *forró* music. Drinks and appetizers. Open Tues-Sat, 7 pm; closed Mon. Casual. Rua do Lavradio 20, Lapa. ☎ (21) 3852-5516.

PLATAFORMA

A big brassy club that presents Carnaval-style samba shows nightly. If you aren't in Rio for Carnaval or pre-Carnaval samba

school rehearsals, this is the next best thing. The show lasts two hours. There's a good *churrascaria* upstairs and Bar do Tom (see below) is part of the complex too. Opens at 10 pm. Casual. Rua Adalberto Ferreira 22, Leblon. ☎ (21) 2274-4022. Reserve a table.

BAR DO TOM

It's named in honor of Tom Jobim who wrote the lyrics to *The Girl from Ipanema* and scores of other Brazilian favorites. First-rate bossa nova music is the lure, with Brazilian popular music running a close second. It is part of the Plataforma complex. Churrascaria Plataforma, Rua Adalberto Ferreira 32, Leblon. ☎ (21) 2274-4022.

CENTRO CULTURAL CARIOCA

Housed in an historic building, the second-floor club has high ceilings, wooden floors and exposed brick walls. Live bands play Brazilian and international music, and well-known groups headline here. Check schedules. Reserve a table for drinks, sandwiches and snacks. The club opens at 7 pm and showtime is 9 pm. Rua do Teatro 37, Praça Tiradentes, Centro. ☎ (21) 2252-6468.

SANTA ROSA LOUNGE

There's a ground-floor restaurant, but it's the Harem Room on the second floor where you can relax on pillows, have a *caipirinha* and listen to jazz or Latin rhythms. Very casual. Open daily from 8 pm. Rua Paul Redfern 41, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2512-2640.

ELITE

Another traditional dance hall, Elite is on the second floor of a colonial building. Regular patrons here dance the *gafieira*, which blends Brazilian and Latin rhythms. Old timers often dress in white suits and wing-tips, while their partners wear silk dresses with swirling skirts. Open Thurs-Sun, from 7 pm. Rua Frei Caneca 4, Centro. ☎ (21) 2232-3217.

MELT

One of Leblon's most popular discos, Melt is surprisingly low key. The dance floor and bar are on the lower level, while the restaurant is above them. Brazilian popular music, samba, bossa nova and hip-hop keep the dance floor crowded. Draws a young upscale crowd. The disco opens at 11 pm daily. Rua Rita Ludolf 47, Leblon. ☎ (21) 2249-9309.

CARIOCA DA GEMA

A small club and bistro in the heart of Lapa, Carioca da Gema's bands play samba and bossa nova music. The dance floor is always crowded. All the dishes on the bistro menu have samba song names. It's moderately priced. The restaurant opens at 8 pm and music starts an hour later. Av. Mem de Sá 79, Lapa. ☎ (21) 2221-0043.

NUTH LOUNGE

Nuth is the Epyptian word for "sky" and it is the perfect description for the soaring setting that was once the home of an architect. Now its two floors are home to a restaurant and a rocking disco. It plays pop and hip-hop,

mixing in some golden 70s sounds. Lots of singles here. Open 9 pm daily; Sun at 8 pm. Av. Armando Lombardi 999, Barra. ☎ (21) 3159-8595.

BOMBAR

One of the most popular discos at this writing, Bombar draws an upscale jet-set crowd. It offers different styles of music each night, including funk, electronica and hip-hop. Check schedules. Open Mon-Sat, from 10 pm; closed Sun. If you get hungry, head next door to Guapo Loco for some tacos. Av. General San Martin 1011, Leblon. ☎ (21) 2249-2161.

BARS & PUBS

As detailed in our *Best Places to Eat* section, Rio has scores of bars, taverns and pubs where people gather after a day at the beach, before going out for the evening, or late at night. Hanging out at these spots can be the evening event as well, since most serve food. Most popular are those with open-air tables.

DEVASSA

Best known for their brews. Serves food too. (More details in *Best Places to Eat*, page 189). Three very popular locations: Av. General San Martin 1241, Leblon, ☎ (21) 2540-6087; Av. Armando Lombardi, 483, Barra, ☎ (21) 2494-7626; Av. Lineu de Paula Machado 696, Jardim Botânico, ☎ (21) 3874-0009.

CAROLINE CAFÉ

An American-style bar with décor reminiscent of the American West. They offer 40 dif-

ferent drinks and 15 types of beer. Good sandwiches and sushi. Closed Tues. Rua JJ Seabra 10, Jardim Botânico. ☎ (21) 2540-0705.

A GAROTA DE IPANEMA
(THE GIRL FROM IPANEMA)

The birthplace of the famous song, this was the hangout for Vinícius de Moraes and Tom Jobim. They composed the song while drinking beer at the verandah table. Lots of memorabilia around, including T-shirts with lyrics. Pizza, pasta, sandwiches and drinks. Daily, 10:30 am-2:30 am. Rua Vinícius de Moraes 49, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2523-3787.

BELMONTE

The Flamengo branch has been around for over 50 years serving great beer and crunchy "pasties" – small empañadas stuffed with shrimp or beef. There are now four Belmontes, but the Flamengo branch remains the most popular. Daily from 7 am (Flamengo), 9 am at other locations. Praia do Flamengo 300, Flamengo, ☎ (21) 2552-3349; Rua Dias Ferreira 521, Leblon, ☎ (21) 2294-2849; Rua Teixeira de Melo 53B, Ipanema, ☎ (21) 2267-9909; Rua Jardim Botânico 617, Jardim Botânico, ☎ (21) 2239-1649.

JOBI

Another bar celebrating its golden anniversary, Jobi is so popular that tables are tightly knit. Cold beers accompany pizza, shrimp and palm empañadas and codfish balls. Casual but also a popular after-work stop, so many are in business attire. Open daily,

10 am-4:30 am. Av. Ataulfo de Paiva 1166, Leblon. ☎ (21) 2274-0547.

LORD JIM PUB

The big screen TV is always tuned to British sporting events such as rugby and cricket, but lots of non-Brits hang out here too. The bar and dartboards are on the first level, while the upper two floors are where British, Indian and Thai foods are served. Open daily from 6 pm; closes 2:30 am weekends and Sun; Fri-Sat at 4:30 am. Rua Paul Redfern 63, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2259-3047.

CANECO 70

This is one of a handful of spots on Leblon's beachfront street. Caneco is the trophy awarded to the winner of soccer's World Cup. Brazil won in 1970 when this place opened. Outdoor tables. Finger foods and pizza. Daily from 11 am. Av. Delfim Moreira 1026, Leblon. ☎ (21) 2294-1180.

BIP BIP

Very casual. Lots of jeans, Bermuda shorts and polo shirts here. Beer, drinks and lots of finger foods. Tues and Sun bring live samba and *chorinho* music. Daily from 11 am. Rua Almirante Gonçalves 50, Copacabana. ☎ (21) 2267-9696.

SHENANIGAN'S IRISH PUB

It's a lively, crowded pub on the second floor. Some booths and tables, but it's usually standing room only. Pool, darts and large screen TV. The terrace overlooks a park. Sandwiches and salads. Rua Visconde de

Pirajá 112, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2267-5860; Av. Armando Lombardi 333, Barra.

BAR LAGOA

Formerly Bar Berlin, the building was stoned during WWII. It still has German food, Art Deco interior and heavy mirrors. It faces Lagoa. Av. Epitácio Pessoa 1674, Lagoa. ☎ (21) 2523-1135.

HORSE'S NECK

For a change of pace head to this second-level hotel bar with an African theme. Quieter than other bars, it serves mixed cocktails and delicious hors d'oeuvres. Open noon-2 am. Sofitel Hotel. Av. Atlântica 4240, Copacabana. ☎ (21) 2525-1233.

BAR CODE 3

A contemporary bar with polished woods and indirect lightning. Second floor is a quiet, comfortable lounge. Good snacks. Rua Paul Redfern 48, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2512-1419.

BRACARENSE

Very popular and casual. Tables extend onto the street but, if they are full, people sit on empty crates or beer barrels. Rua José Linhares 185, Leblon. ☎ (21) 2294-3549. Many claim Bracarense has the best beer in the city.

HARD ROCK CAFÉ

One of the largest branches of this popular chain, it has a rock memorabilia museum and shop. The English-language menu offers burgers, chicken sandwiches and drinks. There is a club level too. Very young crowd.

Av. das Américas 700, Barra. ☎ (21) 2132-8000.

GAY & LESBIAN HANGOUTS

Rio is a gay-friendly destination. It has a large and highly visible gay community that is very active in Carnaval events. While there are clubs that cater to gays and lesbians, you'll find that gays and straights mingle easily in the bars and clubs listed above too. The streets Farme de Amoedo and Texeira de Melo in Ipanema house several gay hangouts. The beach fronting them, Farme Beach, is the most popular gay beach in town. It is marked by a rainbow flag. On Copacabana Beach, gays gather near Bolsa and nearby on the sand fronting the Copacabana Palace Hotel. Look for the rainbow flag on the kiosk there.

> **NOTE:** Most clubs open at 11 pm. Check days of operation, which change seasonally.

LE BOY

Le Boy is the most popular club at this writing. It has three DJs and three dance floors, Go Go boys and drag shows. Can hold over 1,000 people. Closed Mon. Rua Raul Pompéia 102, Copacabana (near Posto 6). ☎ (21) 2513-4993.

LA GIRL

Sharing the space with Le Boy, this is a popular lesbian dance club. It's much smaller than Le Boy. Closed Tues. Rua Raul Pompéia

102, Copacabana (near Posto 6). ☎ (21) 2247-8342.

BUNKER 94

Another very popular disco, Bunker has three floors and three DJs. Sunday is lesbian night and Wednesday and Thursdays are for both guys and gals. Closed Mon and Tues. Rua Raul Pompeia 94, Copacabana. ☎ (21) 3813-0300.

BLUE ANGEL

Blue Angel is a restaurant and bar that has pocket shows and a dance floor. Closed Mon and Tues. Rua Julio de Castilho 15, Copacabana. ☎ (21) 2513-2501.

DAMA DE FERRO

This is Rio's largest club for lesbians. The lounge and club can hold over 1,000 patrons. It's right at the edge of the Lagoa. Closed Mon-Wed and Sun. Rua Vinícius de Moraes 288, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2247-2330.

FOSFOBOX

A recent addition to the gay scene, Fosfobox is a mixed club with live DJs and a crowded dance floor. Closed Mon-Wed and Sun. Rua Siqueira Campos 143, Copacabana. ☎ (21) 2257-3254.

INCONTRUS

Recently renovated, Inc (as it is sometimes called) is the only gay club in Rio that is open seven days a week. It draws a mixed crowd, including older males and lesbians. There is often a drag show at 1 am. Praça Serzedelo

Correa 15, Copacabana (near Leme). No phone.

THE COPA

An attractive club with a 1960s atmosphere, The Copa is not well signed; look for the red curtains. A club and lounge, it often has parties. Live DJs and dance floor. Lesbian night Tues at this writing. Closed Sun and Mon. Rua Aires Saldanha 13, Copacabana. ☎ (21) 2256-7412.

CABARE (CABARET) CASANOVA

The most traditional club in Centro, it has drag and stripper shows. Closed Mon-Wed and Sun. Rua Mem de Sá 25, Lapa. ☎ (21) 2221-6555.

SPAZIO

A friendly bar/disco that draws its patrons from the neighborhood and from Rio's English-speaking community. Open Thur-Sun. Rua Paul Redfern 56, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2540-0842.

GALERIA CAFÉ

Galeria is a popular bar with a sophisticated crowd. The music is loud and high-tech. It can get so crowded that some patrons party on the street outside. Open Thurs-Sat. Rua Texeira de Melo 31, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2523-8250.

CLUBS THAT CATER TO MEN

Looking for steamier entertainment? Rio has its share of clubs with Go Go girls, strippers and discos. Many are on or near Av. Princesa

Isabel in Leme, not far from Le Meridien Hotel. Look for the neon signs.

Café Sensoo. Daily from 9 pm. Shows. Av. Princesa Isabel 7, ☎ (21) 2275-5499.

Frank's Bar. Daily from 10 pm. Shows at 1 am and 3 am. Av Princesa Isabel 185. ☎ (21) 2275-9398.

La Cicciolina. Daily from 9 pm. American-style bar, shows and disco. Av. Princesa Isabel 185. ☎ (21) 2275-8949.

Rio Antigo. Mon-Fri from 2 pm. Bar, show, girls. Over 18. Rua Joaquim Silva 2, Glória. ☎ (21) 2224-9591.

HELP

You can't miss Help, the largest *danceteria* (disco) in the city at the heart of Copacabana Beach. When it opened in the 1980s it was a great singles hangout, but it has faded badly. Now catering strictly to tourists, it's expensive and the single women there are working. Open daily from 10 pm. Av. Atlântica 3432, Copacabana, ☎ (21) 2522-1296.

CONCERT HALLS

The venues that follow are the largest concert halls in the city, each seating several thousand people. Programs vary but include touring international pop groups, Brazilian bands, concerts, shows and even a circus.

TIP: International and Brazilian groups sell out, so check for tickets in advance of your visit.

CANECÃO

Wonderfully Brazilian, Canecão is a personal favorite. We've always enjoyed ourselves here. Although they host international groups, Canecão devotes much of its time to Brazilian artists, particularly those connected to MPB (Brazilian popular music). The hottest acts appear here, especially if they have a new album to promote. Ask the concierge to reserve a good table for you. Canecão is adjacent to the Rio Sul Shopping Center. Av. Venceslau Brás 215, Botafogo, ☎ (21) 2543-1241. www.canecao.com.br.

CLARO HALL

Recently spruced up with more seating and an enlarged stage, Claro Hall is the largest concert hall in town. It plays host to visiting international artists and alternates concerts and shows. On a recent trip, friends saw David Copperfield, the magician. We tried to get tickets to the Imperial Chinese Circus but it was sold out. Via Parque, Av. Ayrton Senna 3000, Barra. ☎ (21) 2430-0700.

CLASSICAL & CULTURAL VENUES

Ask your concierge for some input here because there are so many options – from opera, to ballet, to classical concerts, to chamber music ensembles and art and photography exhibits – and so many venues, that it can be difficult to decipher in Portu-

guese. Events are scheduled in theaters as well as in museums, cultural centers and churches all over the city. Many are free. Even if there is a charge, tickets are inexpensive by international standards.

TEATRO MUNICIPAL

Touring opera and ballet companies have a standard stop in Rio at the stunning Municipal Theater, which was modeled on the Paris Opera House. The theater has its own opera and ballet companies and two fine resident orchestras – the Brazilian Symphony Orchestra and the Rio de Janeiro Philharmonic. They offer series of concerts here and play at smaller locations as well. Visiting orchestras and well-known performing artists appear regularly. Chic attire is the norm. Praça Floriano, Centro (Cinelândia). ☎ (21) 2262-3501. www.theatromunicipal.rj.gov.br/.

Take a few minutes to explore the Municipal Theater's museum.

CENTRO CULTURAL BANCO DO BRASIL (BANK OF BRAZIL CULTURAL CENTER)

The city's premier cultural center is housed in a building dating to the 1880s that was once the headquarters of the Bank of Brazil. One hundred years later it was redesigned and now the six-story building is busier than ever. The domed foyer is impressive and there is always an English-speaking person at the information desk there. Plays, art and photography exhibits and lectures, chamber music, concerts and jazz recitals are only a few of the events scheduled. There is a bookstore, several theaters, a cinema and video center, restaurant and tea room. The fifth-floor library boasts over 140,000 volumes,

including some rare first editions. Rua 1 de Março 66, Centro (near Praça Novembro 15). ☎ (21) 3808-2020. Open Tues-Sun, 10 am-9 pm.

SALA CECILIA MEIRELES

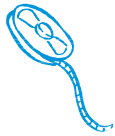
If you enjoy chamber music, you should make an effort to attend a performance at this more intimate theater in Lapa Square. The acoustics are extraordinary. The Brazilian Symphony Orchestra plays here and recently the Chamber Choir of Prague performed. The theater is 40 years old and in previous incarnations was a hotel and a cinema. Shows usually begin at 7 pm. Largo da Lapa 47, Centro. ☎ (21) 2224-3913.

CHURCH & MUSEUM PERFORMANCES

The city of Rio sponsors and promotes concerts, choral groups, piano, violin and harp recitals and chamber music trios in some of the city's most beautiful churches. Among them are **Candelária Church** near Praça Novembro 15, **Glória Church** on a Glória hilltop overlooking Guanabara Bay and in the **Monastery of São Bento** on Rua Dom Gerardo 68, Downtown. Check www.musicanasigrejas.com.br for events.

Other classical concerts and exhibits are held in museums. Among them are the **Modern Art Museum** in Flamengo Park and the **Fine Arts Museum** on Av. Rio Branco in Cinelândia. Check events at www.musicanomuseu.com.br.

CINEMA



Films are shown in their original language with Portuguese subtitles; only kids' films are dubbed.

Brazilian films and directors have become mainstays on the international movie circuit, garnering prizes at prestigious film festivals and at the Oscars. Fernando Meirelles' work directing *The Constant Gardener* was innovative. Also in movie theaters here are first-run films from the US, Europe and Japan.

There are state-of-the-art cinemas in all the shopping centers. Art films or oldies are often shown in small cineclubs. There are a few unusual theaters as well.

Odeon BR, a 600-seat cinema at Praça Mahatma Gandhi 5, in the Cinelândia section of downtown, originally opened in 1926. Its neo-classic architecture has been refurbished and it now hosts Brazilian and International film festivals and art films. ☎ (21) 2240-1093.

Friends tell us that **Estacão Paissandu**, with over 400 seats, has a special smoking room where those who simply can't quit sit on couches and watch the film through a glass wall. Rua Senador Vergueiro 35, Flamengo. ☎ (21) 2285-7314.

Another unusual spot is the **Espaço Unibanco de Cinema**, which has three screens as well as a coffee shop and a used book and record store. Many well-regarded Brazilian films have star-studded openings and parties here. It's at Rua Voluntarios da Pátria 35, Botafogo. ☎ (21) 2226-1986.

SAMBA SCHOOL REHEARSALS

© Mangueira Samba School

Samba is the driving force behind Carnaval and the Samba Schools (actually huge social clubs) are the heart and energy of this annual event. They were given the name "schools" because the earliest rehearsal halls were school yards. Every samba tells a story, using music, words and movement. The movement is the key, for the music makes you want to dance. Schools are usually named for the place they were formed. In the 1930s, the parades started but were highly disorganized. Now the attention to detail is astonishing, the result of months of intensive rehearsals.

Almost as soon as one Carnaval ends, discussions about next year's theme begins. The school selects a theme, writes the songs and music and creates the costumes and floats. Of prime importance are the movements that each wing of the parade follows.

Informal rehearsals start in early fall and by November they are in full swing. You can visit the schools to watch these rehearsals. For information about schedules, ☎ (21) 2253-7676, http://liesa.globo.com.

SAMBA SCHOOLS

The following schools have big followings:

Beija-Flor in Nilopolis, ☎ (21) 2791-2866, www.beija-flor.com.br

Mangueira in Mangueira, ☎ (21) 3872-6786, www.mangueira.com.br

Portela in Madureira, ☎ (21) 2489-6440, www.gresportela.com.br

Rochina in São Conrado, ☎ (21) 3205-3318

Salgueiro in Andarai, ☎ (21) 2288-3318, www.salgueiro.com.br

Note: None of the schools is centrally located. Arrange with your taxi to return at a specific time. Rehearsals usually start at 10 pm, 11 pm or midnight. Their duration depends on the spirits. Give your cab driver a 2-2½-hour timeframe.

ATTENDING A MACUMBA SERVICE

Macumba is the general term that Cariocas use to describe two types of African spirit worship – *candomblé* and *umbanda*. Forced to practice their religions underground, adherents blended their gods (*orixás*) with the traditional Roman Catholic saints. Read more about Macumba on pages 9-11.

Some *terreiros* (houses of worship) allow non-believers to witness the ceremony. The best entrée is to attend with a local, but you can also go with an organized tour.

WARNING: Most *terreiros* are in poor neighborhoods, so if you go on your own, take a taxi and have him come back for you.

Note that this is a religious service and should be treated with respect. No cameras! White is the favored color. Don't wear purple or black which are the colors of death and will keep the saints away. Also, don't stop at the entrance – it blocks the saints from arriving. Some *terreiros* have separate seating by sex.

Ask your hotel concierge to check the schedules of open services. Here's what was offered at this writing:

Candomblé Services at **Ile Acœe D'Osala**, Rua Serido 20, Novo Iguaçu. Mon and Sat, 4 pm. ☎ (21) 2205-6518.

Umbanda Services at the **Spiritualist Center Caminheiros de Verdade**, Rua Comendador João Carneiro de Almeida 133, Engenho de Dentro. Mon, Thurs and Sat, 6 pm. ☎ (21) 2594-6336.

Shops & Shopping

Whether you are an enthusiastic shopper or a reluctant one, you'll enjoy shopping in Rio – and you'll get some good buys too. Cariocas are avid shoppers, as scores of shopping venues attest. There are over two dozen huge shopping malls in the city and no matter the time of day or day of the week, they are crowded. There are independent

shops in these centers as well as branches of popular chain stores. The city's finest boutiques are in Ipanema, with a smaller number in Leblon, where they are at street level or gathered in multi-level arcades called *galerias*. You will enjoy shopping and browsing at the city's *feiras*, which we've detailed in *Sunup to Sundown*, page 123. They sell everything from primitive art to fashionable resort wear. You'll notice artisans displaying their wares along Av. Atlântica in Copacabana in the evening and on weekends. Even on the beaches themselves, vendors stroll by hawking sunglasses, suntan products, fabulous pineapples and coconuts or cold drinks. Shops, some chic and elegant and others musty and jumbled, are located throughout the city, so you are sightseeing as well.

It's best to buy fine jewelry at an established store.

Easily, your best buys here are in jewelry fashioned with Brazil's fabulous gemstones. Traditionally set in 18k gold, they are also designed in 14k gold and silver. Pieces range from traditional and formal to avant-garde and unique. Prices are lower here – not inexpensive, but far less than in the US or Europe. There is no duty for returning United States residents on jewelry made in Brazil.

Brazilian leathers and suedes are supple to the touch and fashioned into chic shoes, handbags and outerwear. They too are very good buys. You should consider Brazilian folk art and crafts, which can range from primitive paintings and woven tapestries to carved woods, rough gemstones and good luck symbols called *figas*.

Bikinis or tangas are almost synonymous with the city. Carefully designed using colorful fabrics, they make great gifts and not only for your svelte friends – note that Carioca women of all ages and sizes wear them. If you are uncertain, pick up a *canga* (pareo) to match. Cariocas use them as cover-ups, but also as mats on the sand. Brazilian resort wear, including the internationally sought after *havianas* (flip flops), are fun to wear during your trip and again at home. Clothing here is trendy and highly styled, but check that the items are actually made in Brazil. Brazilian designers have a lot of experience designing resort wear since it is worn year-round.

> **TIP:** You'll have a hard time finding a shop selling formal or evening attire, since Brazilian women have their dress clothes made to order.

Brazilian music is popular everywhere and there are shops selling CDs and musical instruments as well as bookstores with large music sections. Sports gear such as surfboards, skateboards, soccer balls and team shirts are also great gifts.

All you need is money!

SHOPPING TIPS

- **Shopping hours** vary. Malls are generally open from 10 am-10 pm, Mon-Sat; Sun hours are often 1 or 2 pm-8 pm. Shops and boutiques in the *galerias* open at 9 or 10 am and close at 7 pm weekdays and 1 pm on Sat. They are normally closed on Sun. Shops in hotel arcades stay open till 10 pm.
- **English** is widely spoken in the shops, but less so at the markets and by street vendors.
- Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Diners Club are the **credit cards** widely accepted here. Virtually every shop accepts one or two of them. Carry Reais when shopping at street fairs. Be discrete when paying cash and stay aware of your surroundings when returning the cash or credit card to your wallet.
- **Bargaining** is acceptable – indeed, it's expected – at the fairs, markets and sidewalk vendors, but not at established shops. Gentle persuasion or buying several items can sometimes get a discount.
- There is no **VAT** (Value Added Tax) in Brazil.

BRAZILIAN FOLKLORE

Cariocas, particularly those who are followers of Candomblé or Umbanda, often wear or carry traditional good luck charms. Larger sizes of these charms are found in homes, offices and hospitals. Every handicraft store or folklore shop sells them.

The ***figa*** is the most popular good luck charm. It is a clenched fist with the thumb extended between the second and third fingers. It came to Brazil with the 17th century slave trade. Worn by male slaves, the *figa* was considered a fertility symbol. Today it is worn by both men and women for good luck. It may be carved from wood or precious stones, and some are set with gems. They can be hung from a chain or bracelet or carried on a key chain. Tradition holds that in order to bring luck the *figa* must always be a gift. In a variation, the thumbs-up signal is a common way for Cariocas to indicate that all is well.

The ***penca*** was a status symbol on the country's plantations in the 17th and 18th centuries. Prized slaves received a silver chain and clasp from their owners. Over time, charms were added, usually in the shape of fruit, fish or a *figa*. Each was a reward for loyalty or a well-done service. Today's *pencas* worn as charm bracelets or necklaces are made of filigreed silver.

The **Arvore da Felicidade** (Tree of Happiness) is composed of cut and polished gemstones and has such intricate detail that it can take several months to construct one. The trees are said to radiate positive energy from the minerals in the

stones and are beneficial for both the body and the spirit.

Although not a good luck charm, gaily painted **clay figures** of people at work and play and of animals are a traditional handicraft. There is even a museum (Casa do Pontal) devoted to them. The figures are one of the few traditions that reflect Brazil's Indian culture, and not the African one. Clay sculpting is passed down from generation to generation, especially in the state of Pernambuco. These clay figures make great gifts and wonderful souvenirs of your trip.

CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

United States

The duty-free personal exemption is the total value of merchandise you may bring back to the US without having to pay duty. US residents who have been out of the country for at least 48 hours may return home with US $800 worth of merchandise duty-free. This exemption applies if you haven't used any of it in the previous 30 days and if the items are for personal use. Family members traveling together can pool their exemptions. This includes 1 liter of alcohol, 200 cigarettes and 100 non-Cuban cigars for adults over 21. Other exemptions apply to antiques (over 100 years old, fine art including paintings, drawings, sculptures and jewelry made in Brazil). Established shops will certify that these items qualify for exemption.

You can return with items worth over US $800, but you will have to pay duty on them. You can send packages home duty free. The limit is one package a day to each recipient. Gift items, valued under US $100, are also permitted.

If you are leaving the US with foreign-made items such as laptops and expensive cameras, you might consider registering them with Customs before your trip. There are scores of rules and regulations so check first if you have a particular need. The US Bureau of Customs is in Washington, D.C. ☎ (877) 287-8667, www.customs.gov.

Canada

Canadian residents out of their country for at least seven days, can return with CAN $750 worth of goods duty free. Alcoholic beverages and tobacco products can be included in this exemption. Family members are not allowed to pool their exemptions. Items shipped home can be included in your CAN $750 allowance. If you are out of the country for fewer than seven days, other exemptions apply. Check at Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, Ottawa, Ontario. ☎ (800) 461-9999, www.cra-arc.gc.ca.

SHOPPING VENUES

Although they are relative newcomers to Rio's shopping scene, **malls** are very popular with both Cariocas and visitors. Over two dozen malls are operational at this writing and more are on the drawing board. The

city's newest mall, Shopping Leblon, opened in early 2007. The greatest number and largest malls are in Barra. while the older, more traditional ones are in Botafogo. Comfortable to shop in because they are air-conditioned and are easily reached by car or public transportation and convenient because a variety of shops are clustered in a single location, malls have become social centers as well. They house good dining options, cinemas, theaters and night spots. They also have branch stores of Rio's most popular boutiques. They are not identical, however, so we will detail the most popular malls and tell you what they specialize in.

Street fairs are popular shopping venues and are held in all parts of the city. The vast majority sell produce and household items, but there are a handful that sell folk art and crafts, leather goods, hand-made costume jewelry and even antiques. They have entertainment too. We give more detail about these fairs on page 123 because they are great sighteeing events as well as shopping opportunities. Below, we simply list the fairs and offer a concise write-up.

The Neighborhoods

Ipanema/Leblon

While specialty shops are scattered throughout the city and in the shopping centers as well, the city's finest boutiques are still found along Rua Visconde de Pirajá and the cross streets adjacent to it. Stroll along the seven-block stretch from Praça General Osório to Praça N.S. de Paz. Explore Rua Garcia

d'Ávila, Rua Maria Quitéria and Rua Ánibal de Mendonça as well. There are street level shops and others in multi-level arcades called *galerias*. Jewelry, fashion and international designers' shops are located here. Leblon's finest shops are in the Rio Design Leblon mini-mall. It has gift shops, trendy clothing stores and toy shops.

Copacabana

Av. N.S. Copacabana is the primary shopping street here, although there are some shops and lots of sidewalk vendors on Av. Atlântica. The shops are less fashionable and more practical, but there are folklore shops, souvenir shops, music and bookstores and leather stores.

Centro

It's fun to wander through the downtown shopping area, which is centered around Rua Gonçalves Dias from the Largo da Carioca to Rua Buenos Aires. Several of the streets are closed to vehicular traffic and you can explore hundreds of shops without dodging cars. Less expensive jewelry and clothing and folklore shops are popular here. In the Largo da Carioca itself, there is a daily market and lots of street vendors. Come on a weekday, when the local businesses are open.

SHOPPING CENTERS

SHOPPING LEBLON

Leblon, the city's most affluent residential area, was best known for its understated

boutiques, but the multi-story Shopping Leblon has dramatically changed the shopping scene here. Virtually every well-known fashion and jewelry firm is represented and there are gift and home furnishing stores, as well as dining and entertainment options. It's easy to find. Take the escalators to the second level. Av. Afrânio de Melo Franco 290, Leblon. ☎ (21) 2294-2290.

SÃO CONRADO FASHION MALL

If you visit just one mall in Rio, make it São Conrado. Looking like a giant airplane hangar with long hallways and curved lights, it has a terrific mix of shops – from an H. Stern jewelry store to one selling trendy shoes and handbags, children's stores offering unique toys and another selling clothing. There are three levels and grouped in a newer section are shops of international designers, such as Armani and Zegna. There are a variety of dining options, including small cafés and McDonald's, plus four cinemas. Several buses stop here. Check with your concierge for route numbers. Estrada da Gávea 899, São Conrado, ☎ (21) 3083-0000.

RIO SUL SHOPPING CENTER

The first mall built in Rio and the largest one in the heart of the city, Rio Sul has not faded as new malls appear. Its location helps. In the south zone, it is right at the bend where Leme and Botafogo meet and is easily reached by bus or Metrô. Its variety of shops also keeps Cariocas and visitors coming back. The four floors of shops have something for virtually every shopper. It has sev-

eral food courts, four movie theaters and a night club. Ask your concierge for transportation directions. Rua Lauro Müller 116, Botafogo. ☎ (21) 2545-7200.

> **Note:** Rio Sul has shuttle service from hotels in Copacabana, Ipanema and Leblon. Check to see if your hotel – or one nearby – is included.

SHOPPING DA GÁVEA

Smaller and more sophisticated in its mix of shops, Gávea draws Cariocas from the political and corporate world. It is best known for its half-dozen art galleries that feature works of top-rated Brazilian artists. Its interior design shops are also highly rated. They are added to a small number of upscale fashion stores for both men and women and shops selling Brazil's finest leathers. The pace here is unhurried and not typical of stateside malls. It has four theaters. Rua Marquês de São Vicente 52, Gávea. ☎ (21) 2274-9896.

SHOPPING CASSINO ATLÂNTICO

Located on the three lower floors of the Sofitel Hotel in Copacabana, this is a specialty mall featuring antiques, works of art, jewelry and china. There are over 180 shops, making it a wonderful place to browse. An antiques fair is held here every Saturday, so that is a great day to visit. Tea is served and there is live music. Av. Atlântica 4240. ☎ (21) 2523-8709.

BARRA SHOPPING & N. Y. CITY CENTER

These two malls, side-by-side and connected to one another, are like a small city. Barra

Shopping alone is the largest mall in South America, with over 500 shops and counting. Outlets sell just about anything you can think of, including jewelry, fashion, sporting and resort wear. Many stores cater to young shoppers, as do the restaurants – Outback Steakhouse, Joe and Leo's Burgers and TGIF are among the most popular.

Shopping Barra is always bustling.

N.Y. City Center has its own entrance (look for the Statue of Liberty) but is internally connected to the larger Barra. It has shops too, but is best known as the entertainment annex of the complex, with 18 cinemas, a bowling alley and game stores. There are pizza restaurants as well as bars and night clubs. Although the complex runs a shuttle service to and from Leme and there is a bus service to the area, you should count on taxis for transport here. Av. das Américas 4666, Barra da Tijuca. ☎ (21) 3089-1000. N.Y. City Center's entrance is at Av. das Américas 5000.

> **Note:** There is an information desk in Barra's lobby that gives directions and a brochure listing shops and facilities in each center.

RIO DESIGN BARRA

Probably not the most practical mall for visitors but a fascinating place to explore, this three-level mall is filled with interior design shops. Brazilian decorators have always been on the cutting edge and don't disappoint. There are a few cinemas and the dining terrace has several restaurants that are branches of Rio's best-known dining areas.

Av. das Américas 7777, Barra da Tijuca. ☎ (21) 3461-9999.

VIA PARQUE

If you just can't help yourself and bargains are your thing, head to Via Parque where the shops are outlets for upscale high-priced stores from all over the city. Claro Hall, the city's largest concert theater, is here and there are some restaurants. Av. Ayrton Senna 3000, Barra da Tijuca. ☎ (21) 2421-9222.

Street Fairs

THE HIPPIE FAIR

Although you won't find any long-haired bohemians with love beads here, the Hippie Fair is an institution in Rio. Held every Sunday, year-round. Its artisans used to be local but now come from all over the country to display their paintings, ceramics, colorful wood carvings, hand-tooled leather belts and sandals and inexpensive but very attractive jewelry. The items change constantly. The displays have outgrown the plaza so there are wares on the sidewalk as well. Praça General Osório, Rua Visconde de Pirajá, Ipanema. Sun, 9 am-6 pm.

FEIRARTE PRAÇA QUINZE

Be aware that not all items at Feirarte Praça Quinze are handmade.

This is a more traditional flea market held in the most historic plaza in the city.

There are stalls selling traditional foods and lovely cafés at the Teles Arch nearby. Combine this with a day of exploring Rio's downtown and historic center. Praça Quinze de

Novembro, Centro. Thurs and Fri, 8 am-6 pm.

BABILONIA FEIRA HYPE

Although this fair is held in two locations, the larger and more interesting one is in the paddock of the Jockey Club (racetrack), where you can buy trendy, chic resort wear, jewelry, beach clothes and decorative accessories. There are over 200 stalls, live music and bars. Weekends, 2 pm-10 pm. There is a small entrance fee.

FEIRA NORDESTINA (NORTHEAST)

A weekend-long event, the Feira Nordestina has over 650 stalls that spread over streets, squares and avenues with names from Brazil's northeastern provinces. Cariocas with roots in that part of the country shop here for produce and prepared foods. Other stalls sell the region's crafts and musical instruments. There is music and dancing. It's an event! Campo de São Cristovão, São Cristovão (South Zone). Weekends, 10 am-10 pm.

Antiques Fairs

There are two popular antiques fairs to explore. The **Cassino Fair** is held every Saturday from 11 am to 7 pm in the Cassino Atlántico Shopping Center at the Sofitel Hotel on Copacabana Beach. Antique jewelry, glass, crystal and china are sold in addition to the mall shops that also feature antiques. There's a tea service and classical music. Av. Atlântica 4240, Copacabana.

The **Feira de São Sebastião** offers Art Nouveau and Art Deco items as well as porcelain and silver. It is an open-air fair held near the Market Tower on Praça Marichal Áncora, Centro (adjacent to Praça Quinze). Sat, 9 am-5 pm.

RIO'S BEST SHOPS

Jewelry

H. STERN

Brazil's premier jeweler, indeed one of the most prestigious jewelry firms in the world, has over a dozen shops in Rio. They are found in the arcades of the city's finest hotels and in upscale shopping centers, but don't miss the opportunity to visit and shop at Stern headquarters in Ipanema. The showrooms are muted and elegant and the service impeccable. Many of the pieces on display are unique, designed to enhance the central stone, be it tourmaline, aquamarine or topaz. (See *Gems of Brazil*, pages 29-32, for details about these and other gems). But Stern also has three special collections so you can buy a necklace in Rio, then months later a matching set of earrings in New York and still later a bracelet in Tel Aviv. Stern has shops in Europe, Israel, the US and throughout South America.

H. STERN COLLECTIONS

The **Antares** collection has clean lines and updated classical pieces. The settings have rounded curls that allow light to enhance the brilliance of the stone. The

Ritzy collection's pieces were inspired by nature. A typical piece has tiny delicate white gold leaves covered with tiny diamonds on the front and clasp. They enhance the central droplet-shaped aquamarine. Each piece is made separately and no two are identical. The third collection is **Contour**, which has gold frames covered with small diamonds encircling each central stone. These may be oval or octagonal in shape and in a variety of sizes. Stern pieces are set in white or yellow 18k gold. There are items in a wide range of prices.

H. Stern's pieces have won awards at international design shows.

Even if you don't shop, take the tour that shows a plain-looking rock become a precious stone and visit the H. Stern Museum (see page 114-116). Rua Garcia d'Ávila 113, Ipanema, ☎ (21) 2259-7442.

ANTÔNIO BERNADO

Mr. Bernardo is a designer of jewelry as well as a goldsmith, as his father was before him. He creates his own pieces, many of which seem to be works of contemporary art as well as adornments. The "Honey" earrings look exactly like dripping honey, while the "Sol Nascente" set looks like the morning sun. Bernardo's name has been known in Rio for over 30 years. He designs earrings, bracelets and necklaces; wedding rings are a specialty. Pieces are created in 18k gold, in gold and quartz and in sterling silver. There are Bernardo shops in several shopping centers, and the main store is at Forum Galeria, Rua Visconde de Pirajá 351, Shop #10. ☎ (21) 2523-3192.

KANTER ARTE-JOIAS

Kanter specializes in one-of-a-kind pieces in gold and silver, often designed by Brazilian artists. They use Brazilian gemstones and frequently combine several stones in one piece. They have several collections each year. Rua Visconde de Pirajá 430. ☎ (21) 2287-8299.

AMSTERDAM SAUER

Owner Jules Sauer, originally from France, emigrated to Brazil as a teen and fell in love with the country's gemstones. He opened his first shop in 1941, naming it Amsterdam because that's where he first saw stones being cut. Later, he incorporated his name into that of his business. He has several shops in the city as well as in Miami and on islands in the Caribbean. That may explain why he uses popular Caribbean stones such as tanzanite, Kunzite and opals, as well as Brazilian stones. Sauer has shops in several shopping centers as well as on Av. Atlântica. Av. Lauro Müller 116, Botafogo. ☎ (21) 3873-4360.

The Rio Sul Shopping Center store has a nice collection of Amsterdam Sauer pieces.

Swimwear

BLUE MAN

Swimwear for men and women, with original bikini designs – one line is based on the work of Brazilian artist Jorge Fonseca. There is a big selection, so buy several and mix and match. Blue Man shops are at São Conrado Fashion Mall and Rua Visconde de Pirajá 351, (Forum Galeria) #108.

BUM BUM

Rio's most popular bikini shop, Bum Bum makes the smallest tangas in town. It has the latest colors and styles. Popularly priced too. There are shops in malls. The shop at Rua Vinícius de Morais 130, Ipanema and the one in the Forum Galeria at Rua Visconde de Pirajá 351, have lots of choices.

SALINAS BIKINIS

Salinas suits are sold in shops across Rio as well as in their own shops. The designer/owner says she uses symbols of Rio for inspiration and includes them in the prints and appliqués on the suits. Salinas suits use extra lycra for good fit. Their main store is in Galeria Shopping Ipanema 2000 at Rua Anibal de Mendonça 82, 2nd floor.

LENNY

Lenny Niemeyer designs beach fashions that include strapless swimsuits with leather fasteners and tiny G-strings with ties. He uses lots of pastel tones and even more stripes. Lenny has a shop in the Forum Galeria at Rua Visconde de Pirajá 351, but the one with the largest selection is in São Conrado Fashion Mall, Estrada da Gávea 899, Shop 21.

Lenny suits are more expensive than Bum Bum's.

SAL & SEDA

This is a fun place to browse. While it sells bikinis, it also sells cover-ups including embroidered tanks and *cangas*. Rua Visconde da Pirajá 540.

MORE BIKINI SHOPS

Opa Locka, at Rua Visconde de Pirajá 580, has embroidered designs and good quality fabrics. They are reasonably priced. They also have a stall at the Babilônia Feira Hype. **Praia Brasil** has a large selection of swimwear and bikinis. They stock several brands. Forum Galeria, Rua Visconde de Pirajá 351, #221. If wearing a bikini makes you uncomfortable but you'd like a bathing suit from Rio, try **Track and Field**, a sportswear shop in Rio Sul Shopping Center, Rua Lauro Müller 116, Botafogo, shop #401.

Handcrafts & Folklore Shops

The charming shops below are your best bets for gifts and upscale souvenirs that will keep reminding you of Brazil. The range of items is wide and your best bet is to browse several until something catches your eye. The most common items include ceramic animals, people and bowls, carved woods, especially jacaranda (Brazilian rosewood), baskets, kitchen utensils, leathers and toys. Everything is colorful.

BRUMADO

A wonderful store to browse, Brumado has handicrafts in ceramics and wood as well as basketware, colonial furniture, paintings and antiques. It's in a residential area called Laranjeiras. Rua das Laranjeiras 486, Laranjeiras. ☎ (21) 2558-2275. Mon-Fri, 9 am-7 pm; Sat, 10 am-2 pm.

PÉ DE BOI

Within walking distance of Brumado, this shop specializes in sculptures by regional artists from the Amazon, Pernambuco and Minas Gerais. They also have lace and embroidered items. Some pieces are from Peru, Guatemala and Ecuador. Rua Ipiranga 55, Laranjeiras. ☎ (21) 2285-4395. Mon-Fri, 9 am-7 pm; Sat, 9 am-1 pm.

BRASIL & CIA

A small shop in the Ipanema Inn, its selections of ceramics, woods and basketry are carefully chosen for good quality. They have unusual embroidered and crochet items. Rua Maria Quitéria 27, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2267-4603. Mon-Sat, 10 am-7 pm; Sun, 10 am-4 pm.

CASA DO FOLCLORE

In the H. Stern building, Casa do Folclore sells both traditional craft items and contemporary gifts. Pieces come from all parts of Brazil, as well as other South American countries. Rua Garcia d'Ávila 113, Ipanema. ☎ (21) 2259-7442. Mon-Fri, 10 am-7 pm; Sat, 1-5 pm.

Casa do Folclore has items not seen elsewhere.

BRASIL FEITO A'MÃO

Lots of colorful items for your home. It's in a shopping center, so you can shop for other items as well. Barra Shopping America 700, Shop #110 G. ☎ (21) 2132-8160. Mon-Sat, 10 am-10 pm; Sun, 3 pm-9 pm.

Maria de Barro at shop #102 K in the same center as Brasil Feito A'mão has similar merchandise.

O SOL

Run by a non-profit organization, O Sol was set-up to display and sell a wide variety of folk art. They feature items in clay, wood, straw and tapestry that focus on local lore and legends. Rua Corcovado 213, Jardim Botânico. ☎ (21) 2294-5099. Mon-Fri, 9 am-6 pm; Sat, 9 am-1 pm.

ARTINDIA

To get an overview of handicrafts in a wide variety of materials, visit the Indian Museum. Museo do Indio, Rua das Palmeiras 55, Botafogo. ☎ (21) 2286-8899. Their shop is open Tues-Fri, 9:30 am-5:30 pm; Sat and Sun, 1-5 pm; closed Mon.

BUTIQUE BRASIL

If you haven't spent all your reais or you suddenly remember you need a gift for Aunt Ada, there's a terrific handicraft shop in Terminal 1 at Galeão Airport. It sells unusual musical instruments, dolls dressed in typical Brazilian attire (ie, Bahian women), coffee, *cachaça* and music. It's in the boarding area near the escalator. Daily, 1 pm-10:30 pm.

Resort Wear

RICHARDS

For 30 years Richards was the most popular menswear label in the city; recently, a women's collection was added. Both lines feature clothing that is casual but chic in linens and silks. Jackets, slacks, skirts and beautiful shirts are featured. Richards has shops in several shopping malls, with their

main shop at Rua Maria Quitéria 95, Ipanema.

LELE DA CUCA

Upscale Carioca women have their dress clothes made to order or they head to this store to buy elegant evening wear and such accessories as shoes, purses and belts. Rua Visconde de Pirajá 430, Store B.

SANDPIPER

The clothing here is quite casual but is highly-styled and uses lovely fabrics. Mens clothing only. Rua Santa Clara 75, Copacabana.

ALICE TAPAJOS

This is one of the city's most popular shops for ladies' sportswear, selling Brazilian-made and imported items. There are several branches, including one in São Conrado Fashion Mall and Barra Shopping. The main store is in Forum Galeria, Rua Visconde de Pirajá 351, Ipanema. Shop #116.

CLUBE CHOCOLATE

The shop sells sandals and sexy resort wear, while the restaurant serves light French fare. São Conrado Fashion Mall, Est. da Gávea 899, Shop 202, São Conrado.

CONTEMPORÂNEO

The shop is a happy mix of art gallery and fashion. It sells avant garde designs for men and women that are produced by young, up-and-coming Brazilian designers. Rua Visconde de Pirajá 437.

TEAR GAS

Even if the highly-styled jeans don't fit, shopping here is an experience. The mannequins wear gas masks, skateboards hang from the ceiling and there's a second-floor lounge where the production line can be viewed through an aquarium. Shirts, sweaters and great jeans for men and women. Rua Visconde de Pirajá 444.

TATURANAS

One-of-a-kind items are gathered in this eclectic shop off the beaten path. It is directly across the square from the paddocks of the Jockey Club, so you can combine a stop here with a visit to the Babilonia street fair. Rua José Robert Macedo Soares, Store 50, Gávea.

Lingerie

Looking for lingerie with *bossa*? Head to **Verve**, Rua Garcia d'Ávila 149, and **Nuit Nuit**, nearby in the Forum Galeria, Rua Visconde de Pirajá 351, Shop 224, Ipanema.

Shoes & Leather Goods

VICTOR HUGO

Mr. Hugo, originally from Uruguay, has been making fine leather goods since the 1970s. His shops are elegant and the displays are easy to browse. Handbags and matching shoes, wallets and belts are the primary items. Styles here are similar to those of Prada and Louis Vuitton. The shop at Rua Visconde de Pirajá 507 has a large selection,

as does the one in the Rio Sul Shopping Center in Botafogo. Shop B19.

GILSON MARTINS

Mr. Martins' handbags make you smile. They incorporate the colors and symbols of Brazil. They started with knapsacks made from beach chair canvas so they won't rip. They're made in the shape of a heart or a soccer ball. There are handbags in a variety of shapes and colors with the outline of Sugar Loaf or the Brazilian flag. They are popular with the international jet set. The main shop is at Rua Visconde de Pirajá 462, Ipanema and there is a branch store in the Rio Sul Shopping Center in Botafogo. Shop 201-208B.

Gilson Martins handbags have been exhibited in the Louvre in Paris.

PARCERIA CARIOCA

If you are looking for one-of-a-kind handbags that work well whether you are dressed for a night out on the town or an afternoon shopping spree, try Parceria Carioca. Forum Galeria, Rua Visconde de Pirajá 351, Ipanema. Shop 221.

MR. CAT

Fine handbags and other leather items for both men and women. Botafogo Praia Shopping, Praia de Botafogo 400 and Rua Visconde de Pirajá 414. Shop D.

AREZZO

Best known for its trendy shoes, Arezzo also sells handbags. Reasonably priced. Arezzo has a shop in the Rio Sul Shopping Center in Botafogo. The main store is at Rua Visconde de Pirajá 295, Ipanema.

MOLA AMADA

All the handbags, purses, wallets and leather belts are made in their own factory. Rua Visconde de Pirajá 550, Ipanema.

Sports Gear & Clothing

GALERIA RIVER

This is a mini-mall with over a dozen shops that sell sports gear such as skateboards, surfing boards and soccer balls. They also sell clothing to wear while playing sports, as well as sunglasses. Rua Francisco Otaviano 67, Ipanema.

FUNDAMENTAL

Clothing, handbags, T-shirts and exclusive accessories such as sunglasses and sandals for women. Rua Visconde de Pirajá 550, Shop 219, Ipanema.

Gift Shops

CARGO

Located on the second floor of the Rio Design Leblon Galeria, Cargo has lovely gift items, including woven baskets. Rio Design Leblon, Av. Ataulfo de Paiva 270, Leblon.

BHARA

A funky gift store selling costume jewelry, clothing and decorative items also gives massages, tarot card readings, and runes. The stock changes frequently and you never know what you'll find. Forum Galeria, Rua Visconde de Pirajá 351, Ipanema. Shop 123.

ELIANE CARVALHO

This sophisticated boutique has handmade handbags and gorgeous jewelry. The décor allows for displays in every nook and cranny. There's a café as well. Rua Dias Ferreira 242, Shop A, Leblon. Tues-Fri, 10 am-8 pm; Sat-Sun, 9:30 am-7 pm; closed Mon.

Art Galleries

Brazilian artists are renowned for their contemporary abstract paintings. To get an overview of Rio's art scene, visit the Museum of Modern Art in Flamengo Park (see page 112) and you'll be better prepared for the chic galleries below. Individual art galleries are scattered throughout the city, but there are clusters of them in Santa Teresa, where many artists live and have open workshops, as well as in Gávea Shopping and in Cassino Atlántico Shopping.

In Santa Teresa

Atelîe Suárez, Rua Aurea 80, ☎ (21) 2232-8215. Paintings and sculptures.

Atelîe Souto, Rua Terezina 14, ☎ (21) 2508-9947. Ceramics.

Atelîe Tristão, Rua Paula Matos 46, ☎ (21) 2266-3111. Works in copper and iron.

In Gávea Shopping

Contorno, Rua Marquês de São Vicente 52, ☎ (21) 2274-3832. Drawings and abstract paintings.

Galeria Anna Maria Niemeyer, Rua Marquês de São Vicente 52, ☎ (21) 2239-9144. Contemporary art.

Cassino Atlântica

Arte 21 Galeria, Hotel Sofitel, Copacabana. ☎ (21) 2227-7280. Paintings and antiques.

Memoire, Hotel Sofitel, Copacabana. ☎ (21) 2521-2551. Paintings and antiques.

Anita Schwartz Gallery, Rio Design Leblon, Av. Ataulfo de Paiva 27. ☎ (21) 2274-3873. Contemporary art.

Coffees & Cachaças

ARMAZÉM DO CAFÉ

If you'd like to bring home some *ouro negro* (black gold), head to this coffee shop which sells both beans and ground Brazilian coffees. You can have a cappuccino or milkshake while you wait. Rua Rita Ludolf 87 B, Leblon or Rua Visconde de Pirajá 261, Ipanema.

ACADEMIA DA CACHAÇA

Both a bar and a *cachaça* shop, Academia sells over 50 brands of this sugercane-based liquor used to make *caipirinhas*. Buy a kit and make them when you return home. Rua Conde de Bernadote 26, Shop G. Leblon or Av. Armando Lombardi 800, Barra.

GARRAFEIRA

This liquor store sells a dozen kinds of *cachaça*, including several from the state of Parati, considered the best in the country. Rua Dias Ferreira 259, Shop A, Leblon.

Books & Music

We've detailed our favorite bookstores in the Traveler's Potpourri section on page 55, but the shops below have books and music.

LIVRARIA DA TRAVESSA

A stunning store with a small English-language book section and a terrific music section. It's open till midnight daily. Rua Visconde de Pirajá 572, Leblon. There's a branch at Av. Rio Branco 44, Centro.

MODERN SOUND

This is a great store for CDs and it has a good café as well. Rua Barata Ribeiro 502, Copacabana.

MUSICALE

This unique shop has over 40,000 CDs and DVDs. You can listen to the disc before buying it. Well organized with English-speaking staff. Rua Visconde de Pirajá #207 and #483, Ipanema and N.S. de Copacabana 1103, Copacabana.

LIVRARIA ARGUMENTO

An attractive shop selling books and CDs. The café has live events such as book signings. Rua Dias Ferreira 417, Leblon.

TOCA DO VINÍCIUS

Bossa Nova devotees head to this store/performance space dedicated to the lyricist and to bossa nova in general. It has CDs, books, T-shirts and shows. Rua Vinícius de Moraes 129, Ipanema.

Day Trips

There are several interesting day (or even overnight) trips you can take from Rio. You can head north along the coast to the delightful resort town, Búzios, a tiny fishing village that became a chic resort when Brigitte Bardot stayed there. Or you can drive into the mountains nearby and visit Petrópolis, the summer residence of Dom Pedro II. Rental cars are available, but you can easily visit by bus.

PETRÓPOLIS

The highway from Rio climbs as it passes forests and waterfalls en route to Petrópolis, a mountain city that stands at 2,800 feet above sea level. Less than 50 miles from the city, the air here is noticeably cooler and there is far less humidity. That may explain why the royal family summered here. Today, Petrópolis has 300,000 full-time residents, a number that swells on summer weekends when many Cariocas visit. The city has beautiful gardens and pink-hued mansions. The most popular mode of transport is a horse-drawn carriage.

In the late 19th century, Dom Pedro I bought parcels of land from wealthy aristocrats who lived in the area and built a palace for his family. It was his son Dom Pedro II who spent his summers here with family, even making it the seat of government for a short time. The palace is now the **Imperial Museum**. Set amid a lovely park, it has over 40 rooms fea-

turing shiny wooden floors, works of art and ornate chandeliers. The most interesting exhibits are the royal jewels, which include a gold crown set with over 500 diamonds and pearls. Here too is a telephone given to the Emperor by Alexander Graham Bell. Closed Mon.

A few blocks away is **São Pedro de Alcantara**, the cathedral where Dom Pedro II, his wife Teresa and daughter Isabela are buried. It is on Av. Tiradentes. Tues-Sun, 8-noon, 2-6 pm.

Nearby at Praça da Confluencia, you'll see the **Crystal Palace**, a stunning stained-glass structure that looks like a gigantic birdcage. It was built in France and reconstructed here as a wedding gift for Princess Isabela. Closed Mon.

Take a horse-drawn carriage to the **Grand Quitandinha**, once a grand resort and now a condo. Its Norman architecture is intact and

you can see why it was a famous hotel and casino in the 40s and 50s.

You can easily visit Petrópolis on a day trip, but should you decide to stay here, there are several *pousadas* and very good restaurants.

Places to Stay & Eat

© Posada de Alcobaça

Pousada de Alcobaça is just north of the city. It has 11 rooms, beautiful gardens, a swimming pool, and a good restaurant that serves meals in the garden. ☎ (24) 2221-1240, www.pousadadaalcobaca.com.br.

Pousada Monte Imperial is a charming stop with rustic furnishings and a fireplace in the lobby. There is a restaurant and meals are served in the garden. The 14 rooms are not air conditioned. ☎ (24) 2237-1664.

Locanda della Mimosa serves lunch and dinner. Many of the dishes are Italian. It is a lovely house with gardens and a swimming pool. There are also six guest rooms. Av. Das Mimosas 30, Vale Florido. ☎ (24) 2233-5405.

Leopoldina serves Brazilian and International cuisine. The house specialty is codfish with potatoes, peppers, garlic and olives. Hotel Solar do Imperio, Av. Koeller 376 in downtown Petropolis. ☎ (24) 2103-3000.

Getting Here

You can drive to Petrópolis in 1½ hours if you rent a car. It's north of Rio along BR 040. Buses run on a frequent schedule from Rodoviaria Novo Rio Station. Ask your concierge to call Única Buses (☎ 21-2237-6262) to check current schedules.

BÚZIOS

Armacão de Búzios – known as Búzios – is a sun-filled playground for wealthy Brazilians as well as European and South American tourists. It rivals Punta del Este in Uruguay as the continent's most exclusive resort. Set on an irregularly shaped peninsula 2½ hours (105 miles) northeast of Rio, Búzios has over two dozen beaches, nestled in coves and curves. It has scores of small inns (*pousadas*), very good restaurants and night spots, as well as an active watersports scene. Most visitors are well tanned and well toned.

© BuziosOnLine.com

Originally settled by European pirates and slave traders, Búzios was a sleepy fishing village until the mid-1960s when Brigitte Bardot and her Brazilian lover stopped there. Búzios blossomed and her visit has been memorialized by a bronze statue of Bardot sit-

ting on a suitcase gazing out over the water. It sits on the waterfront promenade which has a long Portuguese name but is always called Orla Bardot.

Why come to Búzios when Rio has so many stunning beaches? It's a good way to move away from the bustle of a big city and to see how upscale Cariocas party. Still a small town, it has perhaps 10,000 full-time residents. In summer (Dec-Mar) you'll find three or four times that number of people here. Many visitors own homes in the area, but the *pousadas* are booked solid so you'll need to reserve in advance. You'll also need reservations in the better-known restaurants. Off-season (June-Sept), the hotels and restaurants are less crowded and prices dip as well. Temperatures at that time of year remain in the 80s and the water is still warm enough for swimming, so weekends are fairly crowded year-round.

Sunup to Sundown

Beaches

There are beaches on both the northern and southern shores of the peninsula. Some north shore beaches are easy walks from town, while others are best reached by water taxis or beach buggies. Two near-town beaches are **Azeda** and **Azedinha**. East of town, they are popular with locals and Europeans, who often swim topless here. Both have calm waters for swimming and snorkeling. Even farther east, **João Fernandes** and **João Fernandinho** are also great for sunning, swimming and snorkeling.

© BuziosOnLine.com

Rase Beach.

North shore beaches west of town have steady winds that make them perfect for windsurfing and Búzio's newest craze, kite-surfing. Both **Manguinhos** and **Rase Beaches** are kite-surfing hot spots, and there is a place in town where you can sign up for a few lessons. Búzios Kitesurf School, www.kitenews.com.br/buzios.

© BuziosOnLine.com

Brava Beach.

On the south shore, **Praia Brava** is the best surfing beach, while beautiful horse-shoe-shaped **Ferradura** is home to the Jet Skiing set. **Ponta da Lagoinha** does not have a great sand strip but its natural amphitheater offers concerts. Mystics believe this cove is magical.

© BuziosOnLine.com

Ferradura Beach.

Praia Geribá, the south shore's longest beach, has both surfing and windsurfing.

BEACH DINING

Beach picnics are not popular in Brazil. Every beach has kiosks and bars that serve food and inexpensive restaurants that are crowded for lunch and all afternoon. Most serve freshly caught fish, such as shrimp, squid and anchovies. **Samuca's Bar** at Ferradura Beach serves crispy shrimp pastry that is delicious, while the **Fishbone Café** at Geribá Beach has a wide variety of sandwiches. **Bar dos Pescadores** (Fishermen's Bar) at Manquinhos Beach serves fish brought to it by the fishermen anchored nearby.

Watersports

If you enjoy scuba diving, day-sail boats at the waterfront head six miles away to **Áncora Island**. Its shape shelters the bay so the water is very clear. Other boats head to **Gravatás**, **Filhote** and **Feia Islands**, also nearby. There is no diving season in Búzios, since the weather is good year-round. Serious divers can join a group heading to **Arraial do Cabo**, a small town 30 minutes drive from Búzios. There is excellent diving off-shore.

Local dive operators offer an "underwater baptism" course to those who've never dived before. It includes 15 minutes of theory followed by on-board instruction and a guided dive. They offer advanced courses as well.

Well-known operators include: **Casamar**, ☎ (22) 2623-2441; **Mar Azul**, ☎ (22) 2623-4354; and **True Blue**, ☎ (22) 2623-2357.

Non-divers can see the ocean floor on a glass-bottom boat ride. Vessels leave from the waterfront for morning and afternoon three-hour excursions.

Hiking & Eco-Travel

The area surrounding Búzios lends itself to eco-tours. They include hiking, rafting, horseback rides and rappelling down waterfalls. Contact: **Canoar**, ☎ (22) 2623-2551.

You can explore town on a bicycle. Rent one at **Búzios Bike** at Praia Armacão (east of Orla Bardot). Alternatively, travel by horse. Contact: **Centro de Equitacão** on Praia Rasa, ☎ (22) 2629-1546.

Shops & Spas

Búzios' attractive shops mostly sell resort wear and handicrafts. The **NI Shopping Center** is a good stop for shops, crêpes and coffee. It's on Rua das Pedras.

Spa Ligia Azevedo in the Brava Hotel has a full program of massages, facials, paraffin manicures and pedicures. The hotel is on Praia Brava. www.ligiazevedo.com.br.

Pousadas & Hotels

Accommodations tend to be small and charming, with picturesque settings. Most are located near a beach or cove. Privately owned, they offer great service and personal attention. You'll feel at home immediately.

Pousada Marbella, Rua Campo de Pouso, Praia Geribá. ☎ (22) 2623-6020, www.pousadamarbella.com.br.

Glenzhaus Lodge, Rua 1, Quadra F (Orla Bardot). ☎ (22) 2623-2823, www.glenzhaus.com.br. Pool shown at right.

Colonna Park Hotel, Praia de João Fernandes, ☎ (22) 2623-2245, www.colonna.com.br/pt-br.

Rio Búzios Beach Hotel, Praia João Fernandes, ☎ (22) 2623-0312, www.riobuzios.com.br.

Pousada Hibiscus Beach, Rua 1 No. 22, Praia João Fernandes, ☎ (22) 2623-6221, www.hibiscusbeach.com.br.

Dining Spots

Head to Rua das Pedras and Orla Bardot, where you'll find scores of small restaurants and *botequim* that serve food. Fresh seafood is the most popular item on most menus. Fishermen deliver their daily catch every morning. Dinner starts late (after 9 pm) and restaurants often serve till 2 am. All the restaurants below accept major credit cards but some beachside spots do not.

Satyricon, an Italian seafood restaurant, is the sister dining spot to the one in Ipanema. Pasta dishes, fish cooked in rock-salt and salmon tartare are fine choices. Orla Bardot 500, ☎ (22) 2623-1595.

Cigalon is the restaurant that is part of the *pousada* that Brigitte Bardot stayed in. It is a lovely spot serving traditional French fare alongside a good wine list. Rua das Pedras 199. ☎ (22) 2623-6284.

Estáncia Dom Juan is a great steakhouse that imports its meats from Argentina. They also serve seafood and pastas. Tuesday is tango night. Rua das Pedras 178. ☎ (22) 2623-2169.

Sawasdee is the place to go for a change of pace. It serves Thai food. Try the crab spring roll. Orla Bardot 422. ☎ (22) 2623-4644.

Shiitake's menu roams Asia with dishes from Japan, China, India and Vietnam. Tables are on an open deck facing the water. Orla Bardot 412. ☎ (22) 2623-0125.

Bar do Zé is a romantic spot that serves fine food at candlelit tables. Risottos with shrimp or asparagus, fresh tuna with a wine sauce and roast beef are good choices. The chef/owner picked up his craft while surfing in Australia and Hawaii. Orla Bardot 382. ☎ (22) 2623-4986.

Chez Michou, a local favorite for over 20 years, serves crêpes. Rumor has it there are over 500 fillings. Very casual. Open-air tables. Rua das Pedras 90. ☎ (22) 2623-2169. No credit cards.

Other good choices include **Pizzaria Caprichosa** and **Massaroca Pizza Drink,** both facing Orla Bardot. **Boom** and **Buzin** are vegetarian salad bars that sell food by weight. They are on Rua das Pedras.

After Dark

Once again, head to Rua das Pedras and Orla Bardot, which has lots of bars and clubs.

Pátio Havana is Búzios' most active night spot. It has five venues, including a bistro that serves continental fare. The **Whiskey Bar** is fun if you enjoy snooker or backgammon and there is a **Cigar Bar** too. The club has live shows and music for dancing. Rua das Pedras 101. ☎ (22) 2623-6137.

Deep Bar is a contemporary club with balconies facing the beach and overlooking Rua das Pedras. There is a bar area and lounge too. Nightly from 8 pm. Rua das Pedras 27. ☎ (22) 62623-6713.

Guapoloco is a Mexican restaurant until 1 am, when it becomes a night club. **Zapata**, nearby, is another Mexican eatery with music. These neighbors are very crowded weekends. Rua das Pedras.

Ponto Bar, **Captain's Bar** and **Takatakata** are all on Rua das Pedras. They have open-air tables and serve exotic drinks.

Getting Here

Several bus companies have air-conditioned service to Búzios from the Terminal Auto Viacão. ☎ (21) 62623-2050.

You might consider taking a shuttle service. It picks you up at your hotel in the morning and drops you at your *pousada* before noon. Contact **Turismo Classico Travel**, ☎ (21) 2523-3390.

The Best of Brazil

It's hard to pull yourself away from Rio, but if you have time and enjoy variety in your travel experiences, buy an Airpass (see below) and visit some of Brazil's other fabulous destinations. To whet your appetite and allow you to plan a trip that suits your interests and pace, we've designed the following mini-guides. While the information is not as extensive as that for Rio, it offers you a feel for the destination as well as some advice on what to do and how to do it. Our selections, in all parts of this vast country, differ from Rio and from one another, with some focusing on natural wonders and others on man-made ones.

DESTINATIONS TO CONSIDER

Manaus

This unusual city is your window into the Amazon – both the river and the jungle. Its fortunes have risen and fallen with the river's tides, and what was once a languid jungle village has become an international city with an opera house modeled on that of Paris.

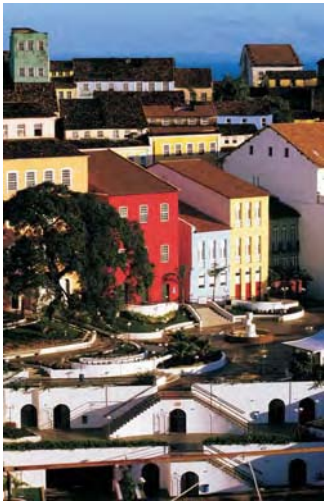
Brasília

Brazil's capital, created out of the wilderness and inaugurated in 1960, is a city laid out in

the shape of an airplane, with striking architecture and a totally planned environment.

Salvador

Located in the state of Bahia, Salvador is where you can see and experience Brazilian culture most intensely. A traditional and beautiful multilevel city, it has myriad fascinating churches and scores of Candomblé *terreiros*, Bahian food is the country's finest.



© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Iguaçu Falls

Higher than Niagara Falls and wider than Victoria Falls, Iguaçu has over 275 cascades and a romantic setting on Brazil's borders with Argentina and Paraguay.

Recife

This is a picturesque city where canals form the major thoroughfares, so it is often compared to Venice. It has grown from a tiny fishing village into a hot resort town. Its sister city, Olinda, is a preserved colonial town

Opp: Brasília © Christian Knepper/Embratur

declared by UNESCO as a national monument.

The Pantanal

A gigantic wilderness and flood plain of the Paraguay River, the Pantanal is the best place in South America to view wildlife and is home to over 600 species of birds. The still largely undeveloped region has small towns that are primarily trading outposts for the area's farmers and ranchers.

São Paulo

It's hard to overlook South America's largest city, with a population fast approaching 20 million people, many of them of Japanese descent. São Paulo is Brazil's commercial center and, because it attracts so many business travelers, it has excellent hotels, restaurants and nightlife. It is not on the ocean, although beach towns are an hour away by car.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

São Paulo sprawls across the land.

Now you can see why Brazil represents a fabulous vacation experience. The rest is up to you.

NOTE: As mentioned earlier, no special vaccinations are required to visit Rio and indeed any of Brazil's urban centers. However, if your travel plans include a visit to Manaus and the Amazon or The Pantanal, you should consult a tropical medicine specialist.

Getting Around

BY AIR

The only practical way to visit this vast nation is to fly from point to point. If you are planning to travel within the country, you should inquire about a **Brazil Airpass**. The pass must be purchased in connection with your international carrier and cannot be purchased in Brazil. Both Varig and Tam offer such passes, but they are not identical, with Varig's offering service to more cities (including Brasília, Manaus and Recife, in addition to Rio and São Paulo). The price of the Airpass is based on the number of stops you make. The minimum price is US $672 for one to five stops. Tam allows only four stops and the fare is based on distance, but the minimum fare is US $479. The entire itinerary must be booked in advance and there is a penalty for making a change. The maximum stay is 21 days from the date of your first domestic flight.

NOTE: The Airpass makes economic sense only if you intend to visit several other destinations in Brazil. There is air shuttle service between Rio and São Paulo from Santos Dumont Airport that leaves every 30 minutes from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm weekdays. Service on weekends is limited. Brazil also has "no-frills" carriers. Gol seems to have the best routes. ☎ 0300 789-2121 or www.voegol.com.br. You can buy tickets online.

BY BUS

Brazil has a federal highway system. Paved roads maintained by the government account for 70% of the highway system. Locally maintained roads vary from bad to very bad. Keep in mind that distances are huge.

Bring a lot of good books and magazines for your bus trips.

DISTANCES/DRIVING TIMES
Rio-São Paulo: 430 km/270 miles (seven hours)
Rio-Brasília: 1,140 km/700 miles (21 hours)
Rio-Salvador: 1,725 km/1,070 miles (30 hours)

There are also carriers from Rio to Montevideo, Uruguay and Buenos Aires, Argentina. Contact: **Embratur**, www.embratur.gov.br

BY RAIL

Rail travel is extremely limited and not a viable option. Most trains carry cargo only.

Restaurant & Hotel Prices

While prices of hotels in São Paulo are comparable to those in Rio, those in other parts of the country are lower and there are few deluxe choices.

Prices are based on a superior double room year-round, not during Carnaval.	Deluxe – $300+ Expensive – $200-300 Moderate – $100-200 Inexpensive – under $100

The same is true of restaurants once you get beyond Rio and São Paulo.

Prices are for a three-course dinner (appetizer, entrée, dessert). Alcoholic drinks are not included.	Deluxe – $60+ Expensive – $45-60 Moderate – $30-45 Inexpensive – under $30

Manaus

Still looking for something different? Something unique and breathtaking? A real adventure? Then pack your bag and hop on the next plane to Manaus, capital of Brazil's larg-

est state, Amazonas, and the perfect base for exploring both the Amazon Rainforest and River, the world's largest (by volume of water). The rainforest covers four million square miles and, while 75% of it is in Brazil, it extends into several other countries as well. From the air it looks like a gigantic green car-

© Johnny Lye/Dreamstime

pet crisscrossed by surging rivers. The Amazon River starts in Peru and, fed by hundreds of tributaries, flows 3,900 miles to the Atlantic Ocean. Seventeen of the tributaries are over 1,000 miles long themselves and at some points the river is so wide that one can't see the opposite shore.

There are as many species of ants (43) in an average rainforest tree as in the entire British Isles.

The rainforest has serious deforestation problems – an estimated 5.4 million acres of jungle are lost each year – yet it provides 30% of the word's oxygen and 20% of its fresh water. It is home to over 400 species of birds, 750 species of trees, 125 different mammals

and 100 reptile species. Most of these are found nowhere else in the world.

When the Portuguese arrived in Brazil it is estimated that several million indigenous people lived in Amazonia. Today, best estimates put that figure at 200,000. You'll immediately notice that most of the people have indigenous faces, rather than the blond, bronze and black faces in other parts of the country.

Manaus stands on the banks of the **Rio Negro**, six miles upstream from its confluence with **Rio Solimões** to form the upper Amazon at a place called "**The Meeting of the Waters**." The site, considered sacred by indigenous people, is the premier excursion from Manaus.

It's easy to believe that Manaus is merely a way station for adventurers who fly in on their way to nearby jungle lodges where they enjoy spotting alligators and exotic birds,

© Christian Knepper/Dreamstime

The Abertura dos Portos monument is one of Manaus' many attractions.

visits to friendly indigenous villages and eating unusual local fish. But leave some time to explore Manaus, home to 1.6 million people. It is a fascinating port city that bustles with activity six days a week and virtually shuts down on Sunday. The city's floating docks are where the locals tie up their brightly colored river boats to sell their produce, freshly caught fish and their handicrafts. Goods are sold at the **Mercado Municipal** (Municipal Market), which was modeled after the Art Nouveau style of Les Halles in Paris. Nearby, the salmon-colored **Teatro Amazonas** is the opera house where Caruso sang and Sarah Bernhardt emoted. If you visit in April or May, you can attend a performance as part of the city's annual opera festival.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Today's Manaus has a light industry zone where most of Brazil's motorcycles and TV sets are manufactured, but in the late 19th and early 20th centuries it supplied 90% of the world's **rubber**. Rubber barons who lived in the city owned vast plantations and recruited local tribesmen to tap the rubber. But, rather than live on the plantations in slave-like conditions, the tribesmen fled into the jungle. Blacks were then brought from the poorer northeastern states to work on the plantations. The rubber barons (about 100 families) became incredibly wealthy and maintained lavish lifestyles. They hired European architects to build their homes as well as stunning municipal buildings such

as the Opera House and Customs Building. Problems arose as the indigenous tribesmen protested the encroachment on their tribal lands. Many were ruthlessly killed. The rubber boom lasted only 25 years. In 1876 a British businessman smuggled rubber tree seeds out of Brazil and transported them to Malaysia, where they flourished. Manaus went into a steep decline until the Brazilian government stepped in and created a free trade zone here and also gave the city the right to produce light industry items. These changes revitalized the city's economy and drew more settlers and businesses. Although the free-trade status has been revoked, the light industry zone has flourished.

Manaus, as seen from the city docks.

The Rio Negro and the Amazon's other tributaries serve as the major source of transportation for the area and are its lifeline. You'll notice that the rivers are as crowded as highways. Although there are local roads, there are no paved highways connecting Manaus to Brazil's other urban centers.

What's In A Name?

While the Portuguese were settling in Bahia and Rio, Spanish conquistadors were exploring this part of northern Brazil. In 1541 Francisco de Orrellana and 60 of his men emerged from the rainforest after a year of exploration. His tales included an account of a vast river and of attacks by hostile Indians that were led by fierce female warriors. The Spanish gave them the name "Amazons," from the Greek myth. That myth told of female warriors who cut off their right breasts so they could control a bow more efficiently. The name was then given to the region (**Amazonia**), the state (**Amazonas**), the river and the forest.

The word "Amazon" in ancient Greek means "without a breast."

A century later the Portuguese decided to stake their claim to Amazonia and sent a military expedition to establish their presence. They made their way up the Amazon to its fork with the Rio Negro and established a town and fort. The town did not immediately flourish – the 1778 census records 34 white men and 200 Indians.

Manaus was named for the well-known local Indian tribe, the Manau or Mannos, who lived in the Rio Negro region. It means "Mother of the Gods."

GETTING HERE

Manaus is 3½ hours by plane from Rio. **Eduardo Gomes Airport** is 11 miles from city center and about the same to the Hotel Tropical complex. Taxis meet all flights and the ride takes 20 minutes. City buses service the

airport as well. Manaus can be included on both Varig and Tam's Airpass. There is a tourist information office at the airport and on Av. Sete de Setembro, Centro.

NOTE: Because the city is so far west of the coast, Manaus time is an hour behind Rio; don't forget to set your watch.

Manaus' telephone dialing code is 92.

PACKING FOR THE AMAZON

Your lodge or tour operator will send you a list of items to bring with you. The climate is characterized by equatorial humidity with heavy rainfall year-round. Cool, lightweight clothing is best. Shorts, T-shirts, loose cotton pants, sneakers, hat, plastic poncho, swimsuit, sunscreen and insect repellent are basics. A small backpack is helpful to carry your gear while on adventure trips.

EXPLORING MANAUS

Manaus' "downtown" is fun and easy to explore on foot. Although the city is spread over hills and surrounded by trees, today as always, everything gravitates toward the waterfront and the Rio Negro. You should start there too.

The Floating Docks

Wake up early and spend the morning at the floating docks (Porto Flutuante). Head down the rickety wooden steps and you'll find yourself in a beehive of activity. Scores of brightly colored river boats docked along the

© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

piers and packed together so closely that their masts seem to form a picket fence. A constant stream of men moves back and forth, loading and unloading goods, often balancing items on their heads and slung over their shoulders. Fresh fish, bunches of bananas, boxes of pineapples and sacks of wheat, beans and manioc flour are sold on the dock and at the markets nearby. The Indian features of these men, who come from the interior, is noticeable. Many of them sleep in hammocks strung up on the decks of the boats.

DOCK CONSTRUCTION

The floating docks were constructed specially to avoid the flooding that would occur if they were static. Concrete piers, mounted on iron girders, are held up by buoys at water level. This allows the docks to rise and fall with the water level, so that ships of all sizes can anchor here year-round. The minimum depth of the river is about 100 feet, and in the rainy season, especially June, that can increase by 40 or 45 feet.

Customs House

Two buildings stand on the shore above the docks. The Italian Renaissance-style older building was

the Alfândega (Customs House), which was built in Britain, then taken apart and reconstructed here in 1902. The bricks were used as ballast en route. It houses government offices.

The modern building is the Hidroviária, the Water Transportation Terminal. All travelers leaving town by ship must pass through it. You'll notice that adjacent docks are filled with river boats that transport people, rather than produce. The Hidroviária is like the local bus station.

Adolfo Lisboa Municipal Market

If you follow Rua Marquês de Santa Cruz along the waterfront you'll see covered stalls selling merchandise, ranging from Manaus T-shirts to medicinal roots. Central to this area is the Adolfo Lisboa Market (Mercado Adolfo Lisboa), where much of the material unloaded from the river boats is sold. The building is one of Manaus' European lega-

cies. Opened in 1906, the sprawling cast iron complex that shelters the stalls is modeled after the Art Nouveau style of Les Halles, Paris (no longer there). All the material used to make it was imported from Europe. The market has four large areas, each dedicated to a different sale – grains, handicrafts, fish and meat and fruit. Many of the grains, fish and fruit are unique to the Amazon region. One huge fish, the *pirarucu*, has ribs so large that they are prepared and served in the manner of spare ribs. Other fish include the *paçu*, *tucunaré*, *jaraqui* and small river sardines. Local fruits include *graviola*, *cupuaçu* and *acaí*. The latter is very popular at Rio's juice stands and has become well known in the US as an energy booster.

Amazonas Theater

Av. Eduardo Ribeiro, Manaus' main thoroughfare leads from the waterfront through downtown Manaus en route to the most famous building in the city, the ornate salmon-colored, Teatro Amazonas, the Opera House. It's about a dozen blocks away. As you set out, take a few minutes to admire the city's cathedral in Praça de Matriz. **Catedral da N. S. da Conceião** (Immaculate Conception) was built by Carmelite missionaries in 1695 but was destroyed by a fire in 1850. It was rebuilt in simple Neoclassical style. The interior is a colorful and peaceful spot for a respite on a hot day. Locals refer to it as Igreja Matriz (Matriz Church). Adjacent to the church in an attractive setting is the **Relogio Municipal** (clock). There are two

other noteworthy buildings en route to the Opera House. The **Public Library** is on Rua Henrique Martins and the **Court of Justice** on Rua J. Clemente.

You can't miss the Teatro Amazonas, with its majestic pillars and soaring metallic dome covered in French tiles. It stands in Praça São Sebastião, a paved area of black and white stones set in a wavy design. The design symbolizes the meeting of the black waters of the Rio Negro with the lighter-colored waters of the Rio Solimões. At the plaza's core is the ***Monument to the Opening of the Ports*****,** erected in 1900 to commemorate the opening of Amazon ports to all nations. The bronze, marble and granite sculpture shows the Amazon River personified as a goddess of Greek mythology. Below her are four ships representing Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas.

The Teatro Amazonas was completed in 1896 after 15 years of construction. The exterior was designed and built by a Portuguese company while the interior was created by French designers. The Italian artist Domenica de Angelis painted most of the artwork within. The theater has been renovated several times, most recently in 1974 when 800 red felt seats were installed. A few of the original seats, which were backless, are on

display. The stage can be raised and lowered, as can the beautiful bronze chandelier. The motif on the stage curtain shows the meeting of the waters; when the curtains open, ripples animate the scene. Ceiling panels show allegories to music, tragedy and drama. Caruso sang here and Sarah Bernhardt performed here as well, back when Manaus was a stop for the social élite.

Teatro Amazonas is not merely a curiosity. It continues to function as an opera house and theater. There are scheduled opera performances throughout the year and the annual opera festival is held here in April and May.

Well-known tenor José Cárreras took part in a recent opera festival.

The Amazonas Philharmonic Orchestra and the Amazonas Jazz Band have weekly concerts. Some nights there are free concerts in the Plaza.

Take the half-hour tour of the theater with an English-speaking guide. You'll have to remove your shoes and don huge slippers to walk in the second-floor ballroom. Its floor is inlaid with over 12,000 pieces of imported and Brazilian woods. Step out onto the balcony for a city view.

Rio Negro Palace & the Indian Museum

Manaus is hot and humid year-round and you'll grow to appreciate the daily afternoon showers. If you haven't wilted, there are two other interesting stops downtown. You can retrace your steps along Av. Ribeiro to Av. 7 de Setembro, a major cross-town street or take a taxi to the palace and walk to the museum, which is nearby.

Palácio Rio Negro is an extravagant home that was built in the 19th century for a German rubber baron. It then became the residence of the governor of Amazonas. Today, it is a cultural center and an art exhibition hall. It also houses a film museum, which offers screenings several times a day. The palace is open Tues-Sun, 3 pm-9 pm. Free. Av. 7 de Setembro 1546, Centro.

The Indian Museum (Museu do Indio) here is run by Salesian sisters, who also operate missions in other parts of the Amazon. Upper-level exhibit rooms show objects that illustrate indigenous cultures and life. One room focuses on rituals and features sacred masks. Made from the bark of a tauari tree, each mask represents an animal. Masks are worn during the feast of "Wax-ti," or jungle spirit. Other rooms display tools and utensils, musical instruments and decorative artifacts. The room devoted to funerary objects and attire is also very interesting. A shop on the lower level sells handicrafts made by Indians connected to the Salesian missions. Open weekdays, 8:30 am-noon, 2-5 pm; Sat, 8:30 am-noon. Small entry fee. Rua Duque de Caxias 356, Centro.

EXPLORING THE AMAZON

Many visitors make Manaus a pit stop before heading to a jungle lodge or river boat for a three- or four-day immersion in Amazon life. However, many local tour operators make it easy for you to explore the river and rainforest on day-trips, while you sleep in air-conditioned comfort in a city hotel. The ex-

cursions are well organized and there are a variety of options – boat rides, visits to native villages, fishing trips, alligator sightings and jungle treks.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Meeting of the Waters

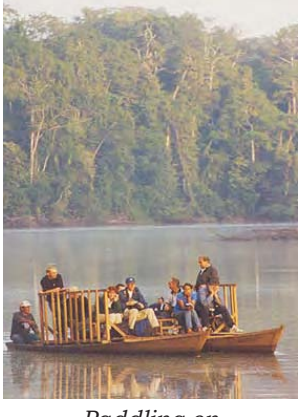
The most popular excursion is to the Meeting of the Waters, where the dark waters of the Rio Negro meet the sandy waters of the Rio Solimões to form the Upper Amazon. It is nine miles east of Manaus. What makes this especially interesting is that the waters don't immediately merge – in fact they flow side-by-side

then swirl into finger-painting patterns for several miles before mixing. This is due to differences in temperature, density and velocity of the two waters. The boat makes its way along the bank of the Rio Negro, where the entire city is laid out – the suburb of Manaus Educandos and its houses on stilts, the factories of the industrial zone and the Municipal Market are all on view.

You can visit the Meeting of the Waters on a half- or a full-day tour. The full-day option includes lunch, often at a floating thatched hut eatery, and a stop at Parque Ecológico do January, where you'll see giant water lily pads and small local animals. Often included are motorboat rides through smaller streams and bayous.

Salvador Lake & Anavilhanas Archipelago

Other tours to consider are those that visit Salvador Lake or Anavilhanas Archipelago. Lake Salvador is only 45 minutes away from Manaus. A small motor boat travels along the *igarape* (flooded woodlands) to the lake that is part of a natural reserve where tapirs, capybaras, jaguars, monkeys, snakes



Paddling on Salvador Lake.

and birds can be seen. There are alligators and piranhas in the lake. You can fish or hike along a forest trail. The Anavilhanas Islands are 60 km/37 miles from Manaus. There are over 380 islands, making it the world's largest freshwater archipelago. You'll see lots of birds. The area is an ecological reserve and ecotourism park. Nighttime tours are also offered.

Presidente Figueiredo

Not all the tours offered are water-based. Two hours north of Manaus is the town of Presidente Figueiredo, which was established in 1981. It has dozens of waterfalls – some over 140 feet high – as well as caves with prehistoric paintings and pottery fragments. You can swim in the black water streams and hike in the forest. It's a pleasant way to spend a few hours.

© Editora Peixes/Embratur

One of the many waterfalls found around Presidente Figueiredo.

RELIABLE TOUR OPERATORS

All of these operators offer day-trips. They can also recommend and book jungle lodges.

Fontur, ☎ (92) 3658-3052, www.fontur.com.br

Amazon Explorers, ☎ (92) 3633-1987, www.amazonexplorers.com.br/en

Viverde Turismo, ☎ (92) 3248-9988, www.amazonastravel.com.br

Selvatur, ☎ (92) 3622-2577, www.selvatur.com.br

Heliconia Amazônia Turismo, ☎ (92) 3234-5915, www.heliconia-amazon.com

HOTELS

In Manaus

TROPICAL MANAUS ECO RESORT
Av. Coronel Teixeira 1320, Ponta Negra
☎ (92) 3659-5000, www.tropicalhotel.com.br
Deluxe

Not a mirage, this is a deluxe hotel set on an Amazon River beach, amid 400,000 sq meters/98 acres of greenery. The 558 rooms and 43 suites were refurbished in 2005. There are two pools (one with artificial waves), five tennis courts, a volleyball court and gym with a sauna. You can also swim at Ponta Negra beach that fronts part of the hotel. There is a children's playground, as well as a zoo that features animals unique to the Amazon re-

© Tropical Hotels

gion. There is a large shopping arcade and offices for tour operators, including Fontur, Amazonia Expeditions and others. Breakfast (included in the rate) is served in the coffee shop, while the grill serves regional dishes for dinner with live musical accompaniment.

Book Tropical Manaus long in advance as it is very popular.

NOVOTEL MANAUS
A. Mandii 4, Industrial District
☎ (92) 2123-1211, www.accorhotels.com
Expensive

This is a comfortable stop located in the industrial district about 10 minutes from downtown. There are three floors and 166 rooms – most are non-smoking. Rooms have contemporary furniture, mini-bars, cable TV and safes. The grounds are spacious and feature an outdoor pool and two tennis courts. The attractive split-level lobby has good shops and appealing décor. There is one large international restaurant and a bar. The hotel offers 24-hour room service.

PARTHENON THE FUTURE
Recife Street 1000, Adrianopolis
☎ (92) 2101-1100, www.accorhotels.com
Moderate

This hotel with an inexplicable name has 126 apartments with living room, kitchen and good-size bathrooms that have tubs and showers. It's about 15 minutes from downtown in the exclusive residential area called Adrianopolis. There is a fitness center, swimming pool and sauna, as well as a restaurant and bar. There are lots of restaurants in the area.

Both the Parthenon and the Novotel are run by the Accor Hotel Group.

BEST WESTERN LORD MANAUS
Rua Marcillio Dias 217, Centro
☎ (92) 3622-2844, www.bestwestern.com
Moderate

This is your best bet if you want to stay in the heart of the city not far from the docks. Its 103 rooms have data ports, mini-bars, refrigerators and showers (no tubs). While it is convenient for daytime exploring, remember that this is the commercial center so its very quiet at night. You'll need a taxi.

TAJ MAHAL
Av. Getúlio Vargas 741, Centro
☎ (92) 3627-3737, www.grupotajmahal.com.br
Moderate

Formerly part of the Holiday Inn chain, the Taj Mahal has a great location not far from the Teatro Amazonas. Opt for a super-luxo room with a queen-size bed and comfortable furnishings. Upper-floor rooms have balconies and some have whirlpools. There is a rooftop pool, a restaurant and a business center. All 208 rooms have data ports, mini-bars, coffee makers and irons. It lost the Holiday Inn name but not the amenities. Recent postings online state that this hotel is looking a little worn.

Jungle Lodges – Barges

There's no better way to immerse yourself in Amazon life than to spend a few days at one of a score of jungle lodges set in the Upper Amazon not far from Manaus. Even more adventuresome are the floating barges with accommodations and there's even a boat-hotel.

Though not identical, there are similarities in the packages offered by these places. The minimum stay is two days (one night) and there are three- to six-day packages. Such deals include pickup and return to Manaus, meals and a variety of adventures that vary with the length of your stay. Commonly, they include jungle treks, nature hikes, alligator and caiman "hunting" (animals are not killed), piranha fishing, birding and visits to native villages, all accompanied by an English-speaking guide. The lodges have their own activities too. Check the amenities and activities on the websites listed below, and keep in mind that local tour operators (listed above) can also make recommendations and reservations for you. Needless to say – plan well in advance and don't forget your sunscreen and bug spray.

TIWA AMAZONAS ECO RESORT
Margem Direita do Rio Negro
☎ (92) 3088-4676, www.tiwaamazone.com
Expensive, all-inclusive

© Tiwa Amazonas Resort

Want to have your cake and eat it too? Then make Tiwa Eco Resort your Amazon stop. On the banks of the Rio Negro, it is only 10 km/six miles from Manaus yet it offers an authentic Amazon River and Forest experience. Management takes both parts of its name seriously – eco and resort. The 26 double chalets constructed of tropical woods sit on stilts on the shore of a beautiful natural lake that is at the heart of the resort. The lake's sandy beach allows for sunning and swimming and the resort's watersport center is stocked with canoes, catamarans, sailboats and water bikes. Occasionally, in the rainy season, the Rio Negro will overflow the beach and it disappears. That is when guests head to the pool. Meals are served in a central restaurant and there is a comfortable lounge/bar area.

© Tiwas Amazonas Resort

Lectures, slide shows and discussion groups are held in the amphitheater. There's a cyber-café. The entire resort occupies two sq km/494 acres and beyond the grounds is the rainforest where you can join a multi-lingual guide for crocodile spotting, piranha fishing, rock climbing, a tree-top tour and evening jungle walks. Inquire about those activities of most interest to you. The boat service to this hotel leaves from the Hotel Tropical dock.

ARIAU AMAZON TOWERS
☎ (92) 2121-5000, www.ariau.tur.br
Deluxe, all-inclusive

Thirty-five miles northwest of Manaus on the Rio Negro, this resort is huge by Amazon standards. It has 290 units, including a dozen air-conditioned suites. Most rooms are small but comfortable, with fans and spacious terraces. They are housed in seven four-story towers that stand on stilts. The towers are linked by wooden catwalks that wind through the jungle at tree-top level. It's a strange sensation to look down at the jungle floor in the rainy season when the Rio Negro's waters overflow and flood the property. The boat ride from Manaus takes two hours, although you can opt for a faster boat ride (one hour) or even a helicopter if you are in a hurry. That is what sets Ariau apart from other jungle lodges. Because all 400 guests cannot pile into canoes to go alligator hunting at the same time, the resort offers optional tours at additional cost. Those include a boat ride to the Meeting of the Waters, a visit to the Anavilhanas Archipelago whose 380 islands and streams provide endless adventurous opportunities, and night-time visits to a secluded Indian village for stories, dances and dinner. The resort has two restaurants, several bars and a swimming pool. Two observation towers soar

© Ariau Amazon Towers

above the trees and allow unobstructed views of the rainforest and river for miles around. Boat service to this hotel leaves from the Hotel Tropical dock.

AMAZON ECO LODGE
☎ (92) 3656-6033, www.naturesafaris.com.br
Deluxe, all-inclusive

Located in Nature Safari's Private Biological Reserve, Amazon Eco Lodge is 72 km/45 miles from Manaus on the southern bank of the Amazon. The four-hour trip from Manaus to the lodge starts your adventure. Vans transport guests to a boat docked at Ceasa Port, about half an hour away, and as that boat crosses the river it passes the Meeting of the Waters. Guests disembark at a small Amazon village where vans wait to transport them to a dock in another village nearby. Speedboats then complete the trip to the lodge, which is set on the lake formed by the Rio Juma. The lodge consists of a central floating module that contains the reception area, sitting areas and restaurant. Swaying hammocks throughout are perfect for relaxing or reading. Accommodations (16 in all) are in five lateral floating modules. They have fans, twin beds, a wash basin and mosquito netting. A double bedded room is available upon request. Guests share three bathrooms and showers. Electricity is available for only a few hours each night, so alternate light sources such as candles are used. Guests head to the floating dock for sunning and swimming when they aren't on the motorized canoes "hunting" for alligators or trekking along rainforest trails. The reserve is home to

There is no heated water at Amazon Eco Lodge, but the sun keeps the water warm.

birds, butterflies, monkeys, fish and orchids. Double canoes are available for guests to explore on their own. There's a minimum three-night stay.

ACAJUTUBA JUNGLE LODGE
☎ (92) 3642-0358, www.acajatuba.com.br
Deluxe, all-inclusive

On the banks of the Acajutuba River, a tributary of the Rio Negro, Acajutuba Lodge is 116 km/32 miles from Manaus. Transfer to the lodge, which passes the Meeting of the Waters, is made on a regional boat made by local natives. Three hours later you'll spot thatch-roofed circular bungalows and you'll disembark at the main bungalow where the reception area and restaurant are located. There are 40 guest rooms in 20 circular wooden bungalows. They stand three feet above ground and are connected to the communal parts of the lodge by elevated walkways. Rooms have private bathrooms but no a/c or electricity. The grounds are lit by battery-operated or kerosene lamps. Acajatuba Lodge is near the Anavilhanas Archipelago and its endless adventure options.

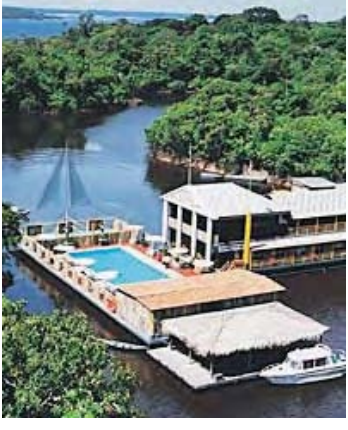
FLOTEL PIRÁNHA ECO LODGE
☎ (92) 3656-6033, www.naturesafaris.com.br
Expensive, all-inclusive

Set in the Piránha Nature Reserve on the left bank of the Solimões River, this flat-bottomed barge has 16 apartments, each with

© NatureSafaris.com

two twin beds and a private bathroom. Shower water is heated by the sun, which keeps it at a comfortable temperature. There are window screens and mosquito nets over the beds. Electricity is used to light the restaurant and communal sitting areas for a few hours each night, but guests use torches and 12V battery-operated lanterns to get around. The sitting area is very pleasant, with comfortable couches and swaying hammocks. There are over 180 lakes in the area. The flotel moves monthly from one area lake to another in order to find the best wildlife. Much depends on the water level and season. Because the Piránha Reserve is a vast wetland, there are scores of birds. Excursions include bird watching, fishing and canoe rides.

JUNGLE OTHON PALACE
☎ (92) 3633-6200, www.othonhotels.com
Deluxe, all-inclusive


© Othon Hotels

While the Flotel Piránha is managed by a nature safari ecotour operator, the Jungle Palace is managed by Othon Hotels, one of Brazil's largest hotel chains. Because of that, the accommodations and amenities

here are somewhat more luxurious. Also, unlike the Flotel Piránha, the Jungle Palace does not move from place to place – it is fixed 20 miles west of Manaus in the Rio Negro. Built on a steel barge, it has an exotic location and offers a comfortable place to come back to after a day of excursions. It has its own filtered water and sewage systems. An all-suite hotel, its 22 units are air-conditioned and have data ports, TV sets and safes. Each has a double bed and a twin. There is a good restaurant and several bars. The tennis court floats – the pool and health club don't.

Views from the panoramic terrace are spectacular, especially at sunset.

IBERO GRAND AMAZON BOAT-HOTEL
Contact Iberostar at www.iberostar.com, or get information from one of the local tour operators listed previously.
Deluxe, all-inclusive

Iberostar is a Spanish-based hotel chain and this boat-hotel offers all the amenities and service you might expect at one of their on-land stops. There are 72 air-conditioned rooms on three decks. All the rooms have twin beds, private bathrooms and balconies. Amenities on board include an adult and a children's pool (children under 15 are not allowed on board), a roof-top Jacuzzi and a fitness center. The four-day cruise travels along the Solimoés River and

© Iberostar Resorts

the Amazon, while the five-day cruise heads along the Rio Negro. Both cruises stop at lakes, nature reserves and villages for excursions into the rainforest. They include photo safaris, piranha fishing and alligator "hunting." Not every cruise is identical – there are three variations, so get details on each. There are two restaurants, a pool bar and snack shop and a theater where folklore dances and live music for dancing are evening activities.

Longer Tour Options

If you want to explore Amazonia more intensely and for more than four or five days, consider **Swallows and Amazons**, a Manaus-based specialty tour operator. They offer a wider selection of extended boat and adventure tours, many of which take place on the Rio Negro near the town of São Gabriel da Cachocirca. Bird watching and fishing tours are their specialties. Seven- , 11- and 15-day tours are offered. Some incorporate stays with local families, others include snorkeling to see tropical fish or canoeing and riverside camping. Swallows and Amazons also maintains **Araras Lodge** in a private refuge 60 km/37 miles from Manaus on the Rio Negro. The floating lodge has 15 private, air-conditioned rooms with bathrooms and verandahs. There is a pool and the cooking features local fish. Since the lodge is near the Anavilhanas Archipelago, many of the adventure tours are on the islands and streams there. Tours are all-inclusive, and even include air travel within Brazil. This or-

ganization is highly regarded. ☎ (92) 3622-1246, ☎ (508) 255-4794 (sales office in Mass), www.swallowsandamazonstours.com.

RESTAURANTS

See price chart on page 303.

CANTO DA PEIXADA
Rua Emilio Moreira 1677 at Praça 14 de Janeiro
☎ (92) 3234-3021
Lunch and dinner, Mon-Sat; closed Sun
Inexpensive

Inexpensive and basically furnished, this is considered Manaus' best seafood restaurant.

ACAÍE E COMPANHIA
Rua Acre 98, ☎ (92) 3635-3637
Moderate

A more upscale choice with a menu that ranges from fish to duck. Acaí (used in power drinks in the US) is the specialty of the house. This restaurant has bamboo walls and a straw roof and is in the Vieiralves section of the city.

CHOPPICANHA BAR & GRILL
Rua Marquês de Santa Cruz 25
☎ (92) 3631-1111
Lunch and dinner daily
Moderate

Located on a pier near the Hidroviária Terminal, Choppicanha is a *churrascaria*. *Picanha* is the house specialty and there are other cuts of beef as well as chicken and fish. Cold beer washes it all down.

FIORENTINA
Praça da Polícia 44, Centro. ☎ (92) 3215-2233
Lunch and dinner daily
Moderate

Look for the green awning and red-and-white checkered tablecloths and you'll have found one of Manaus' best Italian restaurants. Pizza, lasagna and pasta dishes are delicious.

SUZURAN
Rua Teresina 155, Adrianópolis. ☎ (92) 3234-1693
Lunch and dinner daily
Moderate

A local favorite for over 20 years, Suzuran serves traditional Japanese food as well as sushi.

GLACIAL
Two locations: Rua Henrique Martins 585, Centro; on Ponta Negra near the Tropical Hotel
Inexpensive

A self-service ice cream parlor where you can fill your bowl for a set price. Many flavors are made with local fruits. They stay open seven days till 1 am.

SHOPPING

NOTE: Avoid all items made with animal feathers or skin or indeed any animal parts. They cannot be brought back to the US and, even more importantly, contribute to unnecessary killing of local animals.

You'll stroll by souvenir shops as you explore the city. Our favorite shopping venues are places we've mentioned previously. Your best buys here are the unusual handicrafts made by indigenous locals. **The Ecoshop** in the Hidroviária International Terminal, Centro, is an excellent start. Check out the

stalls at the **Mercado Adolfo Lisboa** (Municipal Market) nearby as well. You can bargain here. The shop in the **Museu do Indio** also has traditional crafts.

Iguaçu Falls

When asked to identify the world's greatest waterfalls, many would be hard-pressed to name Iguaçu Falls, tucked into the southwestern tip of Brazil's Paraná state. The Iguaçu River forms the border between Brazil and Argentina here and 18 miles downstream it joins the Paraná River (seventh-largest in the world) to form Brazil's border with Paraguay.

The region where these three rivers meet is often called the Three Corners.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Iguaçu Falls is higher than Niagara Falls and twice as wide as Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. Where Niagara has two massive falls, Iguaçu has 275 separate falls, a number that swells to over 350 in the rainy season (Dec-Mar). Water roars over a precipice three miles wide

and 270 feet high. If you think of the falls as a giant horseshoe, you get a good visual picture. The near leg of the horseshoe is Brazil's side of the falls; the far leg is Argentina's sector. The rounded portion of the horseshoe is where the two countries meet at Devil's Throat (Garganta do Diabo). It's spectacular!

Set in South America's largest national park, the falls are primarily on the Argentinean side of the river, which means that the view from the Brazilian side is broader and more panoramic. You can, however, get up close by following the constructed walkways that lead in front of and below the falls. Visiting the falls from the Argentine park allows you to get close views. You should certainly visit from both sides.

> **NOTE:** You should buy or rent plastic slickers, but you'll get soaked anyway.

The falls were discovered in 1542, but it wasn't until 1918 that the town, Foz do Iguaçu (Junction), was established. Today it is a small, modern city of 250,000 residents but the number is always substantially larger because so many tourists visit. The city itself has few attractions but has scores of small hotels, restaurants and souvenir shops. More upscale lodgings are located on Rodovia das Cataratas, a 28-km/17-mile road that connects Foz and the Brazilian park. Addresses on this road are numbered by their kilometer distance from Foz.

The national park is actually two parks that work together. The Brazilian park, Parque

Opp: Iguaçu Falls © Christian Knepper/Embratur

Nacional do Iguaçu, and the Argentinean park, Parque Nacional Iguazú, envelope the falls and protect the lush jungle that is home to stunning butterflies and hundreds of birds. Although the parks are vast, only the portion near the falls is open to the public. Friends tell us that jaguars and rare orchids flourish in the pristine rainforest.

Nearby Itaipú Hydroelectric Power Plant and Dam allows visitors. A joint effort of Brazil and Paraguay, it is the largest hydroelectric power plant in the world, supplying 25% of Brazil's electricity and 100% of Paraguay's.

SPELLING BEE

Iguaçu is one of those names spelled several ways. In English there are two different variations: Iguasu and Iguassu. In Argentina it is spelled Iguazú and in Paraguay it is spelled Yguazu. We have used the Brazilian spelling, Iguaçu (pronounced Ih-gwa-soo).

GETTING HERE

Varig (☎ 800-468-2744, www.varig.com.br) and **Tam** (☎ 888-235-9826, www.tam.com.br) have daily flights to Foz, with most connecting through São Paulo. If you have a Brazil Airpass, you should select Foz as one of your stops well in advance since flights fill up quickly. The airport (**Aeroporto Internacional Foz do Iguaçu**) is about 10 miles from Foz. Taxis meet all flights. The city bus that connects the airport and Foz takes under one hour.

The dialing code for the Iguaçu area is 45.

© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

TOURIST INFORMATION

Make the tourist office at Praça Getúlio Vargas your first stop. They have English-speaking staff and can help you arrange for a driver/guide, Zodiac boat trips and restaurant reservations. They have maps as well. Hours are 9 am-5 pm weekdays. There is a tourist information booth at the airport, but it isn't as well staffed.

EXPLORING THE BRAZILIAN SIDE

Tropical Cataratas Ecoresort is the only hotel in the Brazilian park. You can see and hear the falls from the hotel grounds and guests can follow the path to the gorge that starts below the hotel. Those staying elsewhere should take a taxi or bus to the park's visitor center to purchase entry tickets. There's a small but interesting exhibit about the area's history in the center. Board the shuttle bus for the ride to the falls. The circular route stops at the Macuco Safari Center, where you can join a rafting or Zodiac trip on the river (see the falls first), at the Tropical Hotel and at the Canoas Restaurant atop the falls. Get off at the hotel and take a peek from the observation deck nearby before setting out along the path. You'll be walking along staircases, concrete and wooden catwalks and grassy walkways. Keep in mind that the falls are not continuous and rock formations and even greenery separate different facets. You will stop and make U-turns many times to get different views and photo angles. Walking across the main ramp to **Garganta do Diabo** is the only must. This is where the

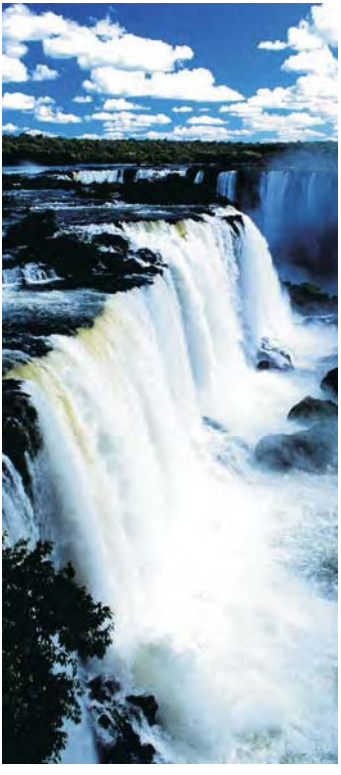
two countries meet and the water pours down in front of you and beside you. When you are thoroughly drenched, take the elevator up to the Canoas Restaurant. You can catch the return shuttle from here or explore the hotel grounds.

If you've visited Niagara Falls, you've probably taken a ride on the *Maid of the Mist* boat. Iguaçu's answer to that comparatively tame ride is the **Macuco Zodiac** ride. Twenty-five-foot Zodiacs head upriver, fighting the currents and riding the waves, until they arrive at the gorge and go on to one of the smaller falls. All your senses will be engaged as the spray and mist cover you and the roar seems impossibly loud. The trip lasts one hour. They also offer rafting trips and eco-tours through the rainforest. ☎ (45) 474-4244 or www.macucosafari.com.br.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

NOTE: Other companies offer boat trips and forest excursions. Check with your concierge or at the tourist office.

EXPLORING THE ARGENTINEAN SIDE



© Christian Knepper/Embratur

You can arrange for a car/driver to take you to Argentina and wait for you. Set the fee in advance. You can also take a Porto Iguaçu bus from Foz. Allow at least one hour for the journey, even though the bus ride is quite short. When you get to the international bridge, Ponte Presidente Tancredo Neves, a Customs and Immigration inspector will board; have your passport ready. Get off the bus at the Puerto Iguazú bus station and ask for the *parque* (par-KAY) bus; it is usually at stall 5. The park bus leaves every hour from 7:30 am to 7:30 pm daily and the ride takes 20 minutes. At the end of your visit, return buses leave from the park between 8 am and 8 pm daily. At the bus station, look for the Foz do Iguaçu bus. You will have to pass Customs and Immigration again. If you decide to rent

a car and drive from Foz to Argentina's park, **Avis** has a rental agency in Foz. It's an easy drive and won't cost more than a car/driver. You do not need a guide to explore either park. Make your reservations using the US number, ☎ 800-331-1212.

The Argentine town here is **Puerto Iguazú**. The Argentineans have invested a lot of pesos into modernizing their sector of the park. The entrance complex has restaurants and shops and there is a visitor center but no literature in English. The key spot here is the **Devil's Throat** (**Garganta del Diablo**) walkway. You reach it by a small-gauge railway that leaves every 30 minutes from the visitor center.

Photographers will pester you to take your photo with the falls behind. It's not expensive and serves as a great souvenir.

You can also board at a second station along the paved walking trail. The ride is fun and 20 minutes later you'll find yourself at the steel catwalk that leads into the heart of the falls.

There are other trails (*pasarelas*) to follow as well. The "Circuito Superior" (Upper Trail) loops around the top of the falls for spectacular views, but the "Circuito Inferior" (Lower Trail) is much more interesting. It starts at the visitor center and can be steep at points, eventually leading to the edge of the Iguazu River. You'll pass several falls en route, and if you have a swimsuit you can take a dip in the calm pools near the end of the trail. You can also hop a park boat for a ride to **Isla San Martin**, an island that's surrounded on all sides by falling water. This short trip is free at this writing. The Zodiac *Adventure Nautica* leaves from the dock at the end of the Lower

Trail. It heads to several falls on the Argentinean side of the river and costs under $20 per person.

> **NOTE:** There are other Zodiac options as well. Check at the visitor center.

Make sure you wear sturdy shoes, a hat and sunscreen. You can rent or buy an inexpensive rain slicker.

HOTELS

TROPICAL CATARATAS ECORESORT
Km 25, Rodovia das Cataratas
☎ (45) 521-7000, www.tropicalhotel.com.br
Deluxe

© Tropical Cataratas

The Tropical is the only hotel in the Brazilian national park. The main building is surrounded by lovely verandahs and gardens. It has 200 rooms, two restaurants, tennis courts, an outdoor pool and nature trails. You can hear the falls but to see them you'll have to follow the path a bit.

BOURBON FOZ DO IGUAÇU
Km 2.5, Rodovia das Cataratas
☎ (45) 529 0123, www.bourbon.com.br
Expensive

The Bourbon has beautiful grounds. Its older wing has standard and superior rooms. The superior rooms face the outdoor swimming pool and have terraces. The newer wing's

© Bourbon Hotels

rooms have contemporary furniture and huge windows that look out onto the grounds. There are over 300 guest rooms, three restaurants, three pools, tennis courts and a children's program. The **Taroba Restaurant,** serving international fare, is the best eatery in Foz.

SHERATON IGUAZÚ RESORT & SPA
Km 4, Ruta 12, Puerto Iguazú
☎ (45) 3757-491800, www.starwoodhotels.com
Expensive

The Sheraton is the best hotel on the Argentinean side. It is in the park and many of the 180 rooms have direct views of the falls. There are huge windows in the lobby, the restaurant, bar and even around the pool so the park and falls are always in sight. The main restaurant, **Garganta del Diablo**, serves international fare with an emphasis on seafood.

CONTINENTAL INN
Av. Paraná, Foz. ☎ (45) 523-5000
www.continentalinn.com.br
Inexpensive

This is Foz's best budget choice. There are 113 recently refurbished rooms, virtually all with showers rather than tubs.

© Continental Inn

They have twin or double beds and contemporary furnishings, including a desk, data port, mini-bar, fridge and safe. There are also suites, which have queen-size beds, bathtubs and separate sitting areas as well as the amenities of the regular rooms. The hotel has a restaurant, a pool and exercise area, a sauna and business center.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

RESTAURANTS

BUFALO BRANCO
Av. Rebouças 530, Foz. ☎ (45) 523-9744
Open for lunch and dinner
Moderate

This is the city's best *churrascaria*. It is known for its *picanha*, but there are lots of other meats available, as well as a terrific salad bar.

CANTINA 4 SORELLE
Rua Alm Barroso 1336, Foz. ☎ (45) 523-1707
Moderate

This Italian eatery is a cheerful stop with a friendly and efficient staff. They serve good pizza as well as pasta dishes.

ZARAGOZA
Rua Quintino Bocaíuva 882, Foz. ☎ (45) 574-3084
Open for lunch and dinner
Moderate

Zaragoza serves international cuisine but the specialties of the house are Spanish, notably seafood. Saturday is *feijoada* day and on Sunday a delicious *paella* is served.

CLUBE MARINGÁ
Km 5, Av. Gen. Meira 45. ☎ (45) 523-2335
Open for dinner Mon-Sat; no credit cards
Moderate

This seafood eatery is on the grounds of the Cataratas Iate (Yacht) Club. The fish served are virtually all caught locally. There is a fixed-price buffet that changes daily.

Brasília

In 1960, a new capital city carved out of the dense wilderness 600 miles northwest of Rio was unveiled. The city, of course, was Brasília. Until 1956, when construction began – to the cynical taunts of many skeptics, convinced that the project was total folly – the area was largely uninhabited. Brasília is fascinating because it is so avant-garde and its architecture and its symmetry are all part of a master blueprint. All structures were designed in perfect proportion to all others. Ever since 1889, when Brazil became a republic, debate had raged around the idea of

establishing a capital city in the interior. But little was done until President Juscelino Kubitschek took office and urged the creation of Brasília in the state of Goiás. The site was at first barren and deserted, but in October 1956 the first trucks arrived with materials for construction and 3,000 workers arrived from Brazil's northeastern provinces. Kubitschek's plan was to build a city in four years. A nationwide contest was initiated to choose the designer of the city, a person to plan and structure every nook. Twenty-six urban planners submitted their ideas. The contest was won by the well-known Brazilian architect **Lucio Costa** and his plan was selected because of its attention to simplicity and quality of life. His design, called "The Pilot Plan," was based on the shape of an airplane, with a central fuselage and flanking wings.

Lucio Costa

Oscar Niemeyer, the architect of UN headquarters in New York, was chosen to design all the buildings. His work here is both imaginative and bold. The two central government buildings – The House and Senate – resemble the UN, but with a green hue. **Roberto Burle**

Opp: Chamber of Deputies © Christian Knepper/Embratur

Marx, so instrumental in landscaping the parks and streets of Rio, was selected as the landscaper. His mark is evident as Brasília has the country's largest park as well as a national park only five minutes from the city, with many natural springs and running poolwater.

The dialing code for Brasília is 61.

For many years Brasília was a capital in name only, as politicians and bureaucrats raced out of the city to return to Rio or São Paulo come Friday. Although that has slowed down in recent years, Brasília's personality remains dominated by its stationary workers – those who hold non-government jobs. They mainly live in the "satellite" cities just outside Brasília and are predominantly from Brazil's northeast, the more impoverished part of the country. They have dictated the non-political life of the city and given it some home-grown culture. **Planaltina** is the oldest satellite and **Taguatinga** is the largest.

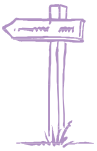
GETTING HERE

Brasília can be included in your Brazilian Airpass. Brazilian carriers such as **Varig** (☎ 800-468-2744, www.varig.com.br), **Tam** (☎ 888-235-9826, www.tam.com.br) and **Gol** (☎ 0300 789-2121, www.voegol.com) connect the capital to other urban centers with several flights daily.

Agree on your taxi fare in advance.

Aeroporto Internacional de Brasília is just as modern as the city. It is only 12 miles from city center. Taxis are your best option and the ride to the hotel sectors takes under 20 minutes.

GETTING AROUND



Taxis are plentiful and not expensive so they are your best bet for getting around. Since the design seems so straight forward you would assume it is easy to navigate the city on your own. Not true! There are north and south wings and within them there are east and west divisions. There are *quadras* and *super quadras* and *blocos*.

> **TIP:** Write the address down carefully (or have your concierge do it for you) because there are lots of abbreviations. Hand the paper to your taxi driver and he will figure it out.

The important buildings mentioned below can be reached by bus. Buses run along the Eixo Monumental between the eastern and western tips. The transfer point is at Eixo Rodaviaria. Buses that say "Plano Piloto Circular" follow a circular route.

TOURIST INFORMATION

There is a tourist information kiosk in the airport and in Praça dos Três Poderés.

CLIMATE

Brasília is set on a highland and has a drier climate than the coast or Amazonas. It is also cooler. Days are warm and sunny, while evenings are cool and comfortable year-round.

TO TAGUATINGA
TO TAGUATINGA, GUARÁ
Terminal Rodoferroviário
Park Shopping
TO ESTAÇÃO SHOPPING
Industria E Abastecimento
Corrego do Acampamento
Rib. Bananal
TO SALTO DE ITIQUIRA, FORTALEZA
Instituto Nacional de Meteorologia
Eixo - N.I. Monumental - Oeste
Cemitério da Esperança
Funcep
Estação Asa Sul
Imprensa Nacional
JK Memorial
Camping CCB
Prq. Rural e Estação Biológica
Parque da Cidade "Sara Kubitschek"
Corpo de Bombeiros
Palácio do Buriti
TO AEROPORTO
SUPER
Estação 114 sul
QUADRA
ASA
SUL
NORTE
SUPER
Estádio Mané Garrincha
Planetário
Military College
Estação Central
Pte. Pres. Medici
ESTR.
Sul
Centro Comercial Gilberto Salomão
Lago do Paranoá (Lago Sul)
PRQ.
Ciclovias
Pre. Pres. Costa e Silva
Pier 21 Shopping
Teatro Nacional
Esplanada dos Ministérios
Setor de Embaixadas Norte
Via L4 Norte
Anexo dos Ministérios
PLANALTO
Itamariti Palace
Palácio do Planalto
PENINSULA SUL
Cota Mil Iate Clube
D. BOSCO
TO UNAF
TO POLOIO DO ALROD
Lago do Paranoá (Lago Norte)
Escola Naval
Ministério da Marinha
PENINSULA NORTE
NOT TO SCALE
Brasilia
1. Catedral Metropolitana
2. Templo da Legião da Boa Vontade
3. Santuário Dom Bosco
4. Museu de Valores
5. Memorial JK
6. Museu Nacional de Gemas
7. Memorial dos Povos Indigenas
8. Museu da Imprenas
9. Parque da Cidade (Sara Kubitschek)
10. Parque Nacional de Brasilia
11. Bay Park
12. Passeio de Barco Pelo Lago Paranoá
13. Vôo Panorâmico de Helicóptero
14. Praça dos Três Poderes
15. Torre de Televisão
© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

EXPLORING BRASÍLIA

The city, laid out in the shape of an airplane, is divided by two main highways. Eixo (AY-shoo) Monumental runs east-west, the "fuselage" runs dead-straight, while Eixo Rodaviario, running north-south, forms the curving wings which cross at the center of the plane. There's no grand monument where the two meet – rather the city's local bus terminus is there. An attractive building, it is the only one in the city designed by Costa himself. He envisioned the crossroads as Brasília's Time Square, but it did not work out that way.

The city's highlights, of course, are its modern structures and the architecture and design of the city itself. The designers left lots of open space, so it's a hearty walk from one point to another; taxis and buses are readily accessible. You might consider a city-tour to orient yourself a bit. The largest structure in the city, the Television Tower, is in the "business class" section of the plane, while the "first class" and "cockpit" sections (east) house a parallel row of 19 government buildings that lead to the twin towers of the legislative branch of government. Flanked by a large cup and saucer, the towers begin the circle of Three Powers Square (Praça dos Três Poderes) made up of the legislative, judicial and executive buildings. Here too are historical buildings and a museum.

Between the tail and the cockpit on both sides of Eixo Monumental are the planned sections designated for hotels, banks, busi-

nesses or cultural activities. The north and south wings of Eixo Rodaviario are the residential sections where important government officials reside. Each is divided into super-quadras and is totally self-contained, with schools, shops, cinemas, athletic facilities and restaurants.

NOTE: You cannot wear shorts or tank tops when visiting government buildings. Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothing and sturdy walking shoes. Wear a hat and sunscreen, and bring water.

Eixo Monumental East

The Television Tower

The tallest structure in the city offers the greatest view. From that vantage point the airplane shape becomes evident. The tower stands 715 feet high, although the observation deck is at 246 feet. There are restaurants and gift shops. The elevator runs daily from 8 am to 8 pm. Facing west (to the tail of the plane) you'll see Praça do Cruzeiro, where the city's first mass was held in 1957, the Kubitschek Memorial and the Memorial dos Povos Indigenas,

which we describe on page 361. Facing east (to the cockpit) the Aztec pyramid you see on your left is the National Theater (Teatro Nacional Cláudio Santoro) and the wine-cup shape on your right is the cathedral. The large park below the tower is Sara Kubitschek City Park. You'll have unobstructed views of the parallel row of government buildings and, in the distance, the twin towers that mark Three Powers Square. Beyond the square is manmade Lake Paraná, the only part of Brasília that was unplanned.

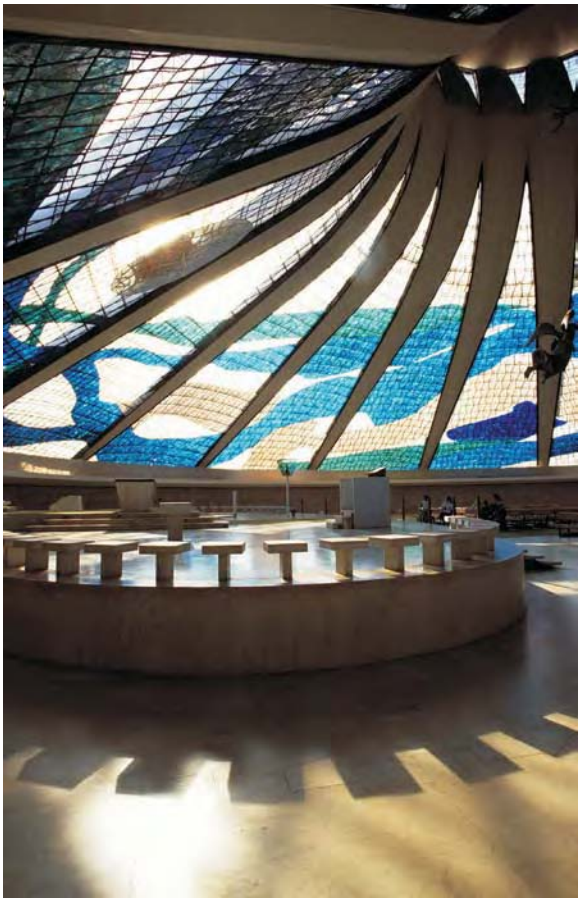
You can walk from the Television Tower to Three Powers Square. Leave at least six hours so you can explore all the sights en route at a comfortable pace.

The Metropolitan Cathedral

Brasília's only cathedral, N. S. da Aparecida, was designed by Niemeyer and completed in

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

1967. It is a magnificent structure. With 16 arched spires representing hands stretched toward heaven circling the entire thing, it has the wide bottom and the skinny top of a wine cup. The hands support huge panes of



© Christian Knepper/Embratur

The cathedral's interior is just as impressive as its exterior.

glass that allow natural light to flood the sanctuary below. The entrance is marked by four bronze statues that symbolize Christ's disciples. The entrance curves downward through a totally dark passage called the Meditation Zone. The darkness symbolizes the time before creation. The marble is from Italy, the crystal from France, the bells a gift from Spain and the organ from Germany. A cross used at the city's first mass was moved from Praça do Cruzeiro for display here. The entire structure is surrounded by a reflecting pool. Open daily, 8 am-6 pm.

National Theater (Cláudio Santoro)

An attractive pyramid decorated with concrete geometric figures, the theater has several stages and art galleries. Daily, 3 pm-8 pm.

Esplanade of Government Buildings

If you walk from the cathedral to the Plaza of Three Powers, you will see other Niemeyer buildings. They form a corridor (Esplanada do Ministérios) and are all government-related. Two are worth visiting. **Itamaraty Palace** (Palácio do Itamaraty) houses the Foreign Ministry. It is a glass-enclosed structure with a façade made of a series of elegant arches. It stands in a Burle Marx-designed reflecting pool surrounded by beautiful flora – a very peaceful spot. The building and reflecting pool are perfect backdrops for the abstract Carrera marble sculpture of the *Meteoro* (*Meteor*). Take the guided tour of the palace interior to see a wonderful collection

of modern art. Check English-language tour schedules with your concierge.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Ministries buildings, seen from inside Dom Bosco Church.

Across the promenade you'll see the **Palace of Justice** (Palácio da Justiça), which has waterfalls flowing between its arched columns. There is a library inside, but it isn't open to the public. Friends tell us that it housed an original set of Shakespeare's works given as a gift to Kubitschek from Queen Elizabeth. There are tours in English. Check schedules with your concierge.

Three Powers Square

Praça dos Três Poderes is at the eastern end of the esplanade. It has several buildings worth visiting. The most striking is the **National Congress** (Congresso Nacional), which consists of two 28-story towers where the offices of the 500 legislators are housed.

Opp: National Congress © Christian Knepper/Embratur

The towers are flanked by a saucer and a bowl. The saucer is where the Senators meet, while the bowl is where members of the House meet. Tunnels, filled with works of art, connect the structures. Burle Marx designed the indoor gardens. You can take the English-language guided tour. Check schedules.

The 25-foot-tall bronze sculpture in the plaza was designed by Giorgi as a monument to the laborers who built Brasília. It is called *Os Candangos*, the name given to the Brazilians who came to a wilderness and built this great city. It depicts two tall, lithe figures holding poles.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

This statue is a tribute to the people who built Brasília.

Os Condangos faces *Planalto Palace* (Palácio do Planalto) that has a marble and glass exterior marked by straight and slanting col-

umns. There is a changing of the guard ceremony here.

The Pantheon (Panteno do Pátria) was designed by Niemeyer in 1985 to honor the nation's heroes. Among them is Tancredo Neves, Brazil's first democratically elected president after years of military rule. Unfortunately, he died before taking office. The Pantheon is curved and resembles a dove. There are many works of art and panels that pay homage to those who died in an early revolt against the Portuguese. Open Tues-Sun, 9 am-6 pm.

The Pantheon building is also called Panteno Tancredo Neves.

The **Flagpole** (Mastro da Bandeira) rises to 300 feet and holds a 240-square-foot Brazilian flag. The flag's background is green for Brazil's forests, yellow for the gold that played such a large part in the country's growth, and blue for the blue skies that keep the country bathed in sunshine. There are 27 stars – one for each state and the Federal District. Each month a different state flag is raised as well.

BACKGROUND

For a bit of background about the building of Brasília, visit Espaço Lúcio Costa, an underground complex added to the plaza in the 1980s. It has a display showing Costa's blueprint and his original ideas for the city. The text is in Portuguese and English.

Also in the square is the small **Historical Museum of Brasília**. It has interesting pho-

tos of famous visitors to the city. Look for the statue of Kubitschek on the façade.

> **TIP:** You might like to take a taxi at this point since the Vila Planalto neighborhood and Alvorado Palace are a hike from the square.

Alvorada Palace & Vila Planalto

Alvorada Palace sits on a peninsula jutting into Lake Paraná. A magnificent building, it is the official residence of Brazil's president. It has white marble slanting columns and was the first building completed by Niemeyer. It is not open to the public but you can see the building and gardens from beyond the gate.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Lake Paranoá

Nearby, Vila Planalto is a neighborhood that housed professional workers who arrived in Brasília. Some of the prefabricated houses they lived in still stand along Av. Dos Engenheiros (Engineers). The area today

houses mid-level government workers and it retains its boomtown, free-spirited ambience. Stop in a local *chopperia* to cool down.

Eixo Monumental West

JK Monument & Museum

Toward the "tail" of the plane, there is a monument and museum dedicated to the founder of Brasília, Juscelino Kubitschek (JK). The monument itself is a tall pole that has a statue of JK inside a crescent moon. The museum is entered through an underground area. In one room are the original plans of the city and JK's personal library is in another. The most interesting room has photos and documents tracing JK's life.

Praça do Cruzeiro

An easy walk from the museum is this elevated plaza where the city's first mass was held in May 1957. The cross that stood here is on display in the Metropolitan Cathedral.

Memorial dos Povos Indigenas

Niemeyer intended this building to be a memorial to indigenous people, but when it was completed the municipal government transformed it into an art museum. Protests erupted and a museum was finally established. The circular memorial has a spiraling ramp around a central plaza. Exhibits show handicrafts and other items of the people who once lived here and now live in Amazonia.

HOTELS

NAOUM PLAZA
Setor Hoteleiro Sul, Qd 5
☎ (61) 3322-4545, www.naoumplaza.com.br
Expensive

© Naoum Plaza Hotels

The Naoum Plaza has had an impressive roster of guests – from Prince Charles to Fidel Castro. A sleek tower, it has 171 rooms and 14 suites. Rooms with two twin or one double bed have contemporary furnishings, terraces that look out over the city and lots of amenities. There is a business center, a fitness center, a pool and a sauna. There are non-smoking floors. The hotel has two highly regarded restaurants. **The Falls** serves international fare, while **Mitsubá** serves Japanese food.

BLUE TREE PARK & BLUE TREE TOWERS
Setor de Hoteis Norte, Trecho 1 (lago)
☎ (61) 3424-7000, (61) 3429-8000
www.bluetree.com.br
Moderate

These sister hostelries on the banks of Lake Paranoá and near Alvorada Palace are referred to as the Blue Tree Alvorada Complex. Because they are on the lake and not in a hotel sector, they offer a resort ambience rather than an urban one. The Park has 335 rooms, including 60 suites. All have terraces facing

© Blue Tree Hotels

Blue Tree Park

the city or the lake. The Towers has 448 suites and 64 of them are junior suites. The suites all have separate living rooms and bedrooms. Both hotels are air-conditioned with down bed accessories, mini-bars and cable TVs. They share a huge palate-shaped pool, tennis courts and fitness center. The complex has a pier on the lake and guests can rent motorboats, sailboats, kayaks and Jet Skis or sign up to go waterskiing. There is a brand new spa. Both hotels offer shuttle service to town and each has a restaurant and cocktail lounge.

HOTEL CARLTON
Setor Hoteleiro Sud 1; Qd 5
☎ (61) 3224-8819, www.carltonhotelbrasilia.com.br
Moderate

If you prefer to be in the heart of the city, consider The Carlton, which is near Sara Kubitschek City Park. Its 195 rooms are set on 15 floors, five of which are non-smoking. The hotel is traditionally furnished with chintz, floral prints and heavy draperies. There is a good-size pool, gym and sauna, as well as a business center. **La Fontaine Res-**

La Fontaine serves feijoada *on Weds.*

taurant serves breakfast (included), lunch and dinner. There is a comfortable piano bar.

PHENÍCIA BITTAR
Seto Hoteleiro Sud 1, Od 5
☎ (61) 3321-4342, www.hoteisbittar.com.br
Inexpensive

There are 3 Bittar hotels in Brasília. All have the same website.

The Phenícia is another centrally located choice and is less expensive than the hotels listed above. Its 130 rooms are decorated with light woods and contemporary furniture. They are air-conditioned and have cable TV and mini-bars. The top-floor restaurant has great city views.

© Bittar Hotels

RESTAURANTS

PORCÃO
Setor de Clubes Sul, Trecho 2
☎ (61) 3223-2002
Moderate

The popular *churrascaria* chain is represented by a huge restaurant (1,000 seats) near the lake. Meats are served *rodízio* style and there is an extensive salad bar that includes sushi and typical Brazilian dishes.

NOTE: In a *rodízio*, all the meats are circulated through the restaurant on long skewers carried by waiters. You can sample every meat and eat as much as you like.

ALICE
Setor de Habitacões Individuais Norte,
Q1 11 (XXX) (North Lake), ☎ (61) 3368-1099
Dinner only, Wed-Sat
Expensive

Owner/chef Alice Mesquite was voted Brasília's best chef in 2005 for her innovative French dishes and menu, which changes frequently. Ambience and service are first-rate.

TRATTORIA DA ROSARIÓ
Setor de Habitacões Individuais Sul Q1 17, Bl H
☎ (61) 3448-1672
Closed Mon
Moderate

Rosarió's menu has lots of pasta dishes as well as familiar Italian specialties.

BARGAÇO
Comércio Local Sul, Qd 405, Bl D
☎ (61) 3443-8098
Lunch & dinner daily
Moderate

A popular spot with locals who enjoy the fish and seafood, is often prepared in Brazilian style.

PIANTELLA
Comércio Local Sul, Qd 202, Bl A
☎ (61) 3324-9408
Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat, lunch only Sun
Inexpensive

This is the best Bahian restaurant in town and it's known for *feijoada*, the national dish.

SAGRES
Comércio Local Norte, Qd 316, Bl E
☎ (61) 3347-2234. Closed Mon
Moderate

Portuguese specialties, including several varieties of codfish and game, are the lure here.

LA TORRETA
Comércio Local Sul, Qd 402, Bl A
☎ (61) 3321-2516
Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat; lunch only on Sun
Moderate

Spanish specialties are featured here, with at least 15 different types of paella.

FRITZ
Comércio Local Sul, Qd 404, Bl D
☎ (61) 3223-4622
Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat; lunch only Sun
Moderate

This is one of the oldest restaurants in town. It serves German specialties and ice-cold beer.

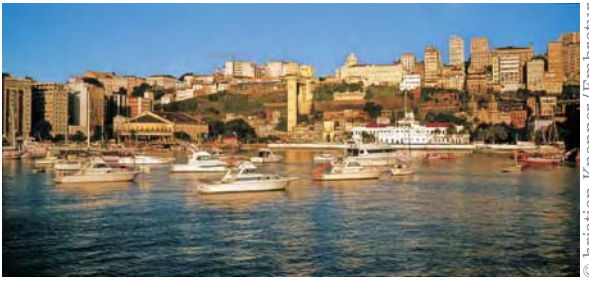
NOTE: All restaurants listed above accept major credit cards. Most restaurants open at 7 pm for dinner and stay open until midnight. With the exception of Porcão, they are not large, so dinner reservations are recommended. Your concierge can make them for you.

SHOPPING

Brasília does not have an indigenous population and so typical handicrafts are not popular here. The city does have several large malls featuring Brazilian chain stores and movie theaters. They are located in the North and South Commercial Zones on either side of Eixo Monumental.

Salvador

Rio is so famous, so implacable a magnet for people, that it has developed its own culture. But it is Salvador, Brazil's second-most visited city (by leisure travelers) and capital of the state of Bahia, that more accurately reflects the country.



© hristian Knepper/Embratur

Boats, with the city in the background.

Salvador is the seed of the nation and its first capital. The city's history is reflected in its architecture, landmarks and rhythms. Its makeup is not homogeneous but an alluring amalgam of Indian, Portuguese and African cultures. Because over three million slaves were brought to Brazil from Africa by the 1500s to work on sugar plantations, this area and others along Brazil's northeastern coast have retained cultural influences that are predominantly African. Most slaves were Yorubá speakers. The Indian culture was absorbed into the Portuguese and African ones so their influence is far less apparent. The sugar plantations brought great wealth to the region, something that is reflected in the

mansions and gold-studded churches in the historic part of Salvador.

The city is home to over two million people and 75% of them are Afro-Brazilian, which is also a legacy of the slave trade. The African influence is strongest in the traditional foods here, which are called Bahian throughout the country. (See *Tastes of Brazil*, page 12.)

Carnaval in Salvador rivals that of Rio in size, but is quite different in style. There are no elaborate balls or samba school parades, but rather lots of impromptu street dancing and *axé* music, a frenetic beat that combines Bahian and Jamaican rhythms. Another African legacy is *capoeira*, a form of self-defense blended with dance movements. It is performed on street corners and plazas throughout the city.

Axé is the Yorubá word for energy.

Religious fervor and historical traditions are part and parcel of Salvador. Legend has it that there is a different church for every day of the year. It's only a slight exaggeration. Brazil is the largest Catholic country in the world, yet many Brazilians also practice Candomblé (read more about this in *Faiths of Brazil* on page 8). Although Candomblé is practiced throughout Brazil, its roots are deepest here since it originated with the slaves. Attending a Candomblé ceremony is a fascinating experience.

King Dom João established captaincies throughout Portugal's possessions in South America. Each assigned captain was expected to govern and protect his area against incursions, often by the Dutch. But it quickly

Opp: Women Traditional dress © ChristianKnepper/Embratur

became apparent that there was a need for a central authority and in 1549 Tomé de Souza was appointed Brazil's first governor-general. He established his headquarters on a hilltop in Bahia overlooking stunning Baía de Todos os Santos (All Saints Bay). He named it Salvador and proclaimed it the capital of Brazil. It retained that status for over 200 years till the capital was moved to Rio in 1763.

The city, built on two levels overlooking stunning Baía de Todos os Santos, is blessed with fabulous beaches, crystal-blue waters and weather that allows swimming year-round. The lower city, **Cidade Baixa**, is the commercial center of the city. It has the port, lots of office buildings, open-air markets, sidewalk musicians and some splendid churches. Don't miss **Mercado Modelo**. It's strictly a tourist stop but has dozens of stalls that sell typical handicrafts, musical instruments and amulets to ward off evil or to bring good luck.

Cidade Baixa is fronted by the bay.

The upper city, **Cidade Alta**, also known as Centro, is where you'll spend much of your time. The historic core, Pelourinho or Pelô, has been faithfully restored and improvements continue at this writing. The restored mansions and Baroque churches stand alongside modern 20th-century buildings on winding narrow cobblestoned streets called *ladeiras*. Many house museums, art galleries and shops. They are colorfully painted in pastel shades.

> **NOTE:** Pelourinho and its 17th- and 18th-century buildings were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985.

The two levels are linked by steps and narrow *ladeiras*, but everyone takes the Lacerda Elevator that was built a century ago to tote whale oil.

Under the sun-filled skies of Salvador there's a vibrant city to explore, as well as lovely beach areas and islands in the bay.

> **WARNING:** Salvador is a beautiful but poor city. A great many beggars, young and old, haunt the Historic City where tourists are. Sometimes they reach out to touch you – but it is just to get your attention. Use good common sense. Do not carry large amounts of money. Use your camera discreetly. Pickpockets are quite common, especially in crowded plazas. There is a visible police presence in the city day and night.

GETTING HERE

Salvador is a stop on both Varig's and Tam's Airpass programs. Should you decide to make Salvador your only other stop in Brazil, you should consider Gol, Brazil's low-cost airline. There are flights to Salvador from Rio, São Paulo, Brasília and Recife.

Salvador's International Airport, Deputado Eduardo Magalhnes, is 20 miles northwest of the Historic City. The ride from the airport

follows Av. Getúlio Vargas along the beach areas. You should opt for a pre-paid taxi from the airport to your hotel since regular taxi drivers don't speak much English. You'll see pre-paid taxi kiosks as well as money-exchange booths and a tourist office in the airport.

Salvador's area code is 71.

EXPLORING UPPER CITY

Salvador was nurtured on churches. The sheer number of them – 166 – reveals the religious fortitude here. They and the forts that dot the city trace and link Salvador's early history. The churches also illuminate the many architectural styles that were experimented with and developed. You'll see the influences of the Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo and Neoclassic periods.

Start your stroll in Pelourinho, where ornate spires and towers of scores of churches dominate the skyline.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Skyline of the old city.

1 Lacerda Elevator
2. Misericórdia Church
3. Mercado Modelo
4. N. S. da Conceição Church
5. Castro Alves Theater
6. São Francisco Church
7. State Museum
8. Largo do Pelourinho
9. Carmo Museum
10. N. S. dos Passos Church
11. Cathedral
12. Afro-Brasilian Museum
13. Religious Art Museum
14. Modern Art Museum
15. Costa Pinto Museum
16. Bahian Art Museum
17. Lighthouse
18. Fort São Marcelo
19. Bonfim Church
Salvador
TO
PORTO
MAPA 2
PELOURINHO
SÉ
BARROQUINHA
VITÓRIA
GRAÇA
ONDINA
BARRA
PITUBA
AMARALINA
PIATÃ
RUA JOSÉ JOAQUIM SEABRA
Av. BARROS REIS
BR-324
RUA PROF LUIZ ANSELMO
RUA BARROS FALCÃO
Av. MÁRIO LEAL FERREIRA
Av. ANTONIO CARLOS MAGALHÃES
Av. PARALELA
Av. PROF PINTO DE AGUIAR
Av. ORLANDO GOMES
Av. JORGE AMADO
ALM DAS ESPATODIAS
Shopping Iguatemi
Shopping Itaigara
Lagoa e Parque de Pituaçu
Av. DOM JOÃO VI
Av. LAFAYETTE COUTINHO
RUA CARLOS GOMES
Av. VASCO DA GAMA
RUA PREDILIANO PITA
MIGUEL CALMON
Av. SETE DE SETEMBRO
Av. CENTENÁRIO
Av. PRINCESA ISABEL
Av. ANITA GARIBALDI
Av. CARDEAL DA SILVA
RUA WALDEMAR FALCÃO
Av. SANTA LUZIA
Av. JURACY MAGALHÃES
ESTRADA DE SANTA CRUZ
Horto Florestal
Parque da Cidade
Centro de Convenções
Av. PAULO VI
Av. PROF MAGALHÃES NETO
RUA RIO GRANDE DO SUL
RUA PERNAMBUCO
RUA BAHIA
Av. OTÁVIO MANGABEIRA
RUA DO NORTE
Av. OSWALDO CRUZ
Av. AMARALINA
RUA BAEPENDI
RUA ONDINA
RUA MACAPÁ
ZOO
GARIBALDI
AVENIDA OCEÂNICA
R. M. BURNIER
BAÍA DE TODOS OS SANTOS
Atlantic Ocean
Praia do Farol da Barra
Praia da Pedra Alta
Praia de Ondina
Praia da Amaralina
Praia de Pituba
Praia de Piatã
Praia da Armação
HUNTER PUBLISHING
NOT TO SCALE
© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

NOTE: If you find yourself in the Lower City, take the Lacerda Elevator up to Praça Tomé de Souza. The impressive building there, **Palácio Rio Branco**, was built in 1919 for the governor of Bahia. It now houses the Tourist Office. Stop in and pick up a city map.

Although you can explore this area by following your eye, we like to start in the large square Praça de Sé, which is more popularly called **Terreiro de Jesus**. So large that it once comprised three city blocks, it houses three important churches and several museums. The largest and most important church stands on the west side of the square.

HIPPIE FAIR

Terreiro de Jesus is the site of the city's **Hippie Fair**. Every Sunday, artists and craftsmen from the region come to sell their wares and you can often get good buys. At any time of the day or night, there will be young men engaged in *capoeira*, a style of self-defense blended with dance movements. It is often accompanied by *berimbau* music. It's customary to leave a tip if you listen and watch for a while and especially if you take photographs.

Catedral Basílica

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Catedral Basílica was constructed between 1657 and 1672 by Jesuits. It was modeled after a church in Portugal and the marble used on the façade and stone used in the interior walls were brought from there. The high altar is decorated in gold leaf. Don't miss the center ceiling, which is decorated with paintings of the four evangelists. There is also a huge central medal with the face of Jesus.

ASIAN INFLUENCE

A curiosity here is the Asian features and clothing on some of the altar figures and on the ceiling painting near the entrance. Speculation is that some of the Jesuits had previously served in China or the Portuguese possession Macão. Some of the tiles were brought from Macão.

Church of the Venerable Third Order of the Dominicans

Just to the north of the cathedral is a small 18th-century Baroque church called **San Pedro of the Clerics**. It's worth a peek, but the larger church across the plaza is much more interesting. Igreja São Domingos de

Gusmão da Ordem Terceira was completed in 1723. It too was built in Baroque style and is best known for its carved processional saints and other sacred objects. City guides mention that the saints were often hollow and used to transport money between Portugal and Brazil. Note that there are Asian touches here as well. You can walk upstairs to the second floor where a reception room features exquisitely carved furniture.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Local artwork for sale in the Upper City.

Old Faculty of Medicine

Three museums are housed in the neo-classical building Antiga Facilidade de Medicinos (Old Faculty of Medicine) adjacent to the Basilíca. The one of most interest is the **Museu Afro-Brasileiro** (Afro-Brazilian Museum). It has a vast collection of articles that show the development of the Afro-Brazilian culture when the slaves settled in Brazil as free men. Many are of a religious or spiritual

nature and include weavings, paintings, pottery and carvings. The photographs are fascinating. A large exhibit dedicated to *candomblé* explains the meaning and characteristics of each *orixá* (god) and what role each plays. All the text is in Portuguese, but English-speaking staff often take the time to explain it. Don't miss the room where 27 carved wood panels portray each *orixá* and the animal and symbol associated with it. The work was done by Carybé, a Bahian artist.

Other museums are the **Memorial de Medicina** (Memorial to the Old Faculty of Medicine) and the **Museu de Arqueologia e Etnologia** (Archeology and Ethnology Museum). Open weekdays, 9 am-5 pm. Small entrance fee.

Ordem Terceira de São Francisco

Look for the wide cobblestone street with a tall cross in the center leading from Terreiro de Jesus. The figure on the cross is São Francisco de Xavier, the patron Saint of Salvador. The plaza at the end of the street, Praça Padre Anchieta houses two "don't miss" churches. The smaller of the two, **Ordem Terceira de São Francisco**, was in existence when the Franciscans came to Brazil to stay. Its façade of square gray stones carved to resemble silver altars is in Spanish Baroque style. There are 14 paintings of The Stations of The Cross and a small cloister encircled by blue Portuguese tiles.

The stonework was covered by paint for five centuries and was rediscovered in 1932.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

View of the church and convent.

Church and Convent of San Francisco

Seemingly not satisfied, the Franciscans decided to build a far bigger and more opulent church. The Igreja de São Francisco and its *convento* were built from 1708 to 1723. The church, with two towers, is Brazil's richest and is often called The Gold Church. The façade was completed in 1713, but the all-gold interior took years longer to complete. The gold leaf is so minutely detailed that the church itself seems to sparkle. The entrance is marked by panels of blue-and-white glazed Portuguese tiles that depict the birth of Saint Francis. In one panel of gold carv-

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

A peek inside tells you why people call this The Gold Church.

ings you'll see grapevines with birds on them and small boys gathering the grapes. The marble basins were a gift from the Portuguese king. The encircling convent has a beautiful tiled courtyard. Only men are permitted inside. Services are held here and the church is open Mon-Sat, 8 am-5 pm.

Home of Jorge Amado

The square beyond Terreiro de Jesus is Largo do Pelourinho and at #51 you'll find the house of one of Brazil's most famous writers, Jorge Amado. Although he never won the Nobel Prize, he was often mentioned. Perhaps it was because he lived a turbulent life. An outspoken Communist, Amado was jailed and saw some of his works burned. He lived in exile in Prague for awhile, but by the 1960s his work started to be appreciated. He had lived in Salvador as a student and started to set his works in Bahia. His most famous

work, *Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands*, was made into a film. The collage of book covers in the ground-floor café shows how many languages his works have been translated into. The photos upstairs trace his life with explanations in Portuguese only. The house is open Mon-Sat, 9 am-6 pm.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Casa de Jorge Amado Foundation

City Museum

Next door, the Museu da Cidáde is not overly impressive but two exhibits are worth examining. The Carnaval exhibit shows the contrasts between Salvador's Carnaval celebration and the one in Rio. It uses puppets and costumes to illustrate the differences. Another exhibit shows the *orixás* (gods) that the slaves brought to Brazil as part of Candomblé. The museum is open Tues-Sat, 10 am-5 pm.

Largo do Pelourinho

Largo do Pelourinho is one of the area's most interesting stops. More triangular than square, it is at the heart of an enclave of mansions and homes. Many are restored and it's not hard to imagine them when ladies sat on the balconies to observe the beating and selling of slaves from a discreet distance. Political prisoners were also brutalized on the stocks. The plaza is very attractive today and has several public stages where plays are held and local musicians perform. Locals come to dance as well. Your concierge will have a list of events in the square.

Our Lady of the Rosary of the Blacks

If you haven't had your fill of churches, stop at N.S. do Rosario dos Pretos, built by and for slaves during the years 1704 to 1796. A creamy yellow building in Baroque style, it has interesting statues depicting the black saints of the Catholic Church. If you attend a service you'll notice that drums are used, rather than an organ. The church is downhill from Largo Pelourinho on one of the narrow streets called

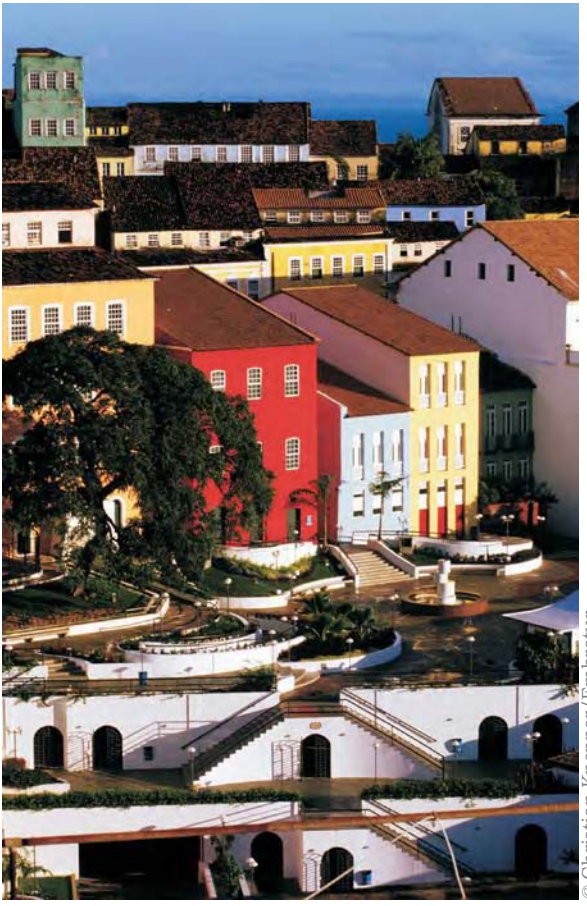
ladeiras. Weekdays, 8 am-5 pm; weekends, 8 am-2 pm.

Carmelite Church and Convent

Follow Rua do Carmo, a *ladeira* that heads uphill from the lowest point of Largo Pelourinho, and you'll find yourself at the Convento do Carmo Pousada, which was built in the former church of the same name. The Carmelite Church and Convent were built in 1586 and they continued to function as such until the 1960s, when a religious museum opened in it instead. The buildings needed major renovation and were closed for several years until the Pestana Hotel Group bought the properties. The group recently opened a *pousada* on the grounds, keeping intact the colonial architecture and other convent features. If you want to stay in Pelourinho this is the place (see *Hotels*, page 400), but if not you should stop by for a drink and tour. The hotel has also restored the adjacent church, Ordem Terceiro de Carmo and museum. (Since the churches and convent were part of a UNESCO Historic Site, the Pestana Hotel Group was required to renovate all the buildings.) It's become a 16th-century architectural gem.

WARNING: Pelourinho is a safe place to explore and you'll notice tourist police as you stroll around. If you are here after dark, stick to well-lit streets. Be alert for pickpockets when you're in crowds.

The *ladeiras* between Largo Pelourinho and Terreiro de Jesus often lead to tiny hidden plazas with cafés and shops. Some have music at night. Especially nice are Praça Tereza Batista and Praça de Arte, Cultura e Memoria.



© Christian Knepper/Embratur

EXPLORING LOWER CITY

The area around Lacerda Elevator is full of bustle and activity. Colorful open-air markets are filled with frenetic bargaining and counter-bargaining and there is a swirl of color and exotic tastes and smells. It's a great place for photos.

The streets surrounding the markets and port are filled with Bahian women in multicolored skirts selling and cooking food. (Most locals opt for a brown fried fritter made of ground beans stuffed with ground shrimp. They put a dollop of hot sauce on it.) Head to **Mercado Modelo**, which is an enclosed market and an experience you should enjoy. Handicrafts are one of the lures, but you can buy *cachaça*, nuts, hot sauces, woven hammocks and leather goods. The building has blue designs and Gothic-style windows. In the back there's a tourist office. Market hours: Mon-Sat, 9 am-6 pm; Sun, 9 am-2 pm. Praça Visconde de Cayru 250.

© Mercado Modelo

You can and should bargain at Mercado Modelo.

Lacerda Elevator itself was built in 1872 and was remodeled in Art Deco style in 1930. It runs from 5 am-midnight.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

View from the top of Lacerda Elevator

N.S. da Conceição de Praia

Not far from the elevator near the port you'll see this church, which is enveloped in myth and history. Dating from the founding of Salvador, it was originally a straw tent. Its present structure was started in 1739 using prefabricated stones sent from Portugal. The stones were numbered and the quarryman in Salvador followed the guidelines sent with the stones. But things got complicated when he died and the guidelines were misplaced. Finally, his grandson located the lost sequence and the church was finished.

QUEEN OF THE SEA MYTH

The myth says that in order for the stones to arrive in Salvador, the sailors shipping them had to visit the realm of Iemanjá, Queen of the Sea (an *orixá*).

The church ceiling and the image of N.S. da Conceição are stunning. But it is as the

DO BONFIM
SENHOR

starting point for the **Festival of Washing** that Conceição is best known. On the third Thursday in January, a large group of Baianas (Bahian women), dressed all in white and carrying flowers and pots of water on their heads, leaves this church en route to the Igreja de Nosso Senhor do Bonfim. Nosso Senhor do Bonfim is Oxalá, the father of all the gods and goddesses. He sits on a sacred hill about five miles away near the bay. When the faithful reach the church, they proceed to wash the steps in a ritual of renewal and vitality. The church itself is typically Rococo, but its interior is Neo-Classical. Part of the church's status derives from the belief that it's the site of many miracles. The "miracle room," where extraordinary things happen, is lined with the belongings of people who experienced miracles. N.S. da Conceição is in the Largo de Canceição de Praia and N.S. do Bonfim is in the Praça do Senhor do Bonfim in Alto do Bonfim. Hours are generally 8 am-noon and 2:30-6:30 pm daily; closed Mon.

FITAS DE SENHOR DO BONFIM

The Igreja do Bonfim is closely associated with *fitas do Senhor do Bonfim* (*fita* is "ribbon," and the Senhor do Bonfim is both Jesus Christ and his syncretized counterpart Oxalá), which are sold by wandering vendors both in Pelourinho and in front of the Igreja do Bonfim itself. The length of the *fitas* (47 cm) corresponds to the length of the right arm of a wooden statue of Jesus positioned on an altar within the church.

Opp: Fitas do Senhor do Bonfim © Knepper/Embratur

Museum of Sacred Art

You'll need a taxi to visit two museums nearby. The Museu de Arte Sacra is housed in a former Carmelite Monastery adjacent to the Igreja de Santa Theresa. The two house the largest religious collection of its sort in South America. There are sculptures and images in clay, soapstone, ivory and wood. Many are from the Old World, but some are local. Also of interest is the silver altar that was brought here when the Praça de Sé Church was torn down. There is a terrific view of the bay from the blue-and-yellow tile sacristy. Hours: 11:30 am-5:30 pm weekdays. Rua do Sodré 276, Centro.

Carlos Costa Pinto Museum

The Museu Carlos Costa Pinto was opened in 1969 by a local businessman who wanted to preserve Bahian culture. His collection includes furniture, silver, jewels and works of art, but most interesting are the typical objects worn by slaves such as *pencas* and *figas*. Daily except Tues, 2:30-6 pm. Av. 7 de Setembro 2490, Vitória.

WARNING: Cidade Baixa is not the best place to explore after dark, when offices and markets are closed and streets are deserted. Confine your exploring here to daylight hours. Be aware of pickpockets at the markets. Take taxis when dining here.

FORTS

Salvador's historical bodyguard has been its forts; they have preserved and sustained the city. In 1549, Salvador's birth year, the governor general was ordered to fortify the city. He had built a strong, yet futile, wooden fence whose circumference formed the first outline of the city. Its presence provided no security so Manoel Teles Barreto, captain and governor, built Santo Antônio da Barra and Monte Serrat, two large, sturdy structures. For two centuries these strategic forts were enlarged and they became the initial buttress of the city. In time, more forts were built. They became obsolete in the 19th century and many now serve as museums.

Forte de São Marcelo

Forte de São Marcelo, or N.S. Populo fort, is the best-known and most-visited. Its thick stone walls perch on a sandbank 300 meters/1,000 feet from the dock, facing Mercado Modelo. Construction on the solid circular structure began in 1650 and was completed in 1725. Until the middle of the 18th century, the fort had 18 cannons that were fired to warn residents and also to celebrate holidays. The chapel was used as a prison for political prisoners. Boats ferry visitors to the

© Bahia-Online.com

fort. They leave from in front of Mercado Modelo.

Fort Santo Antônio da Barra

This fort doubles today as a nautical museum and lighthouse. Built between 1591 and 1602 of rock and limestone, it has six outstanding angles and four entryways. The fort was taken by the Dutch in 1624 and retaken the following year. It offers beautiful views of All Saints Bay. The museum inside the lighthouse has a collection of maps and charts, navigational instruments and archeological finds from wrecks in nearby waters. The signs here are in Portuguese and English. Fort Santo Antônio da Barra is located near the entrance to Barra. The *farol* (lighthouse) is one of the best viewing sites in the city, especially at sunset.

Monte Serrat

Monte Serrat, one of the two original forts, also offers beautiful views of the city. It was occupied by the Dutch twice. Shaped like an irregular hexagon, the fort is at Boa Viagem, on a hill on the west side of Itapagipe Peninsula. During the Dutch invasions, it provided cross fire with Santo Antônio. It has changed

names several times and is sometimes referred to as Forte São Felipe. From this fort you can look across the bay and see Lower Town, the cliffs of Upper Town with its church spires and, beyond the historic town, the modern high-rise buildings of the city.

There are other forts interspersed around the city and its environs.

BEACH AREAS

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Salvador is set on the Itapagipe Peninsula, bordered by Baía de Todos Santos (All Saints Bay) on one side and the Atlantic Ocean on the other. The Historic City was built near the southern tip and the bay, but the modern city has expanded northward along the Atlantic. Some of the city's most popular neighborhoods along the Atlantic shore include Vitória, Barra, Ondina and Rio Vermelho.

Primarily residential, they have hotels, trendy restaurants, shops and nightlife. Some have beaches as well. Being both tropical and on the coast, the city is a place to swim and sun. The peninsula has over 30 miles of beaches and those farthest from the port area are cleanest.

You can enjoy good swimming at the following beaches: **Ondina**, **Rio Vermelho**, **Pituba**, **Artistas**, **Piatá**, **Itapuá**, **Stella Maris** and **Flamengo**. Beaches are very crowded on weekends. Often there is live music, sand sports and attractive women in tiny bikinis. The negative is that there are rarely bathrooms on the beach strips. For a beach overview, hop on the bus marked "Roteiro das Praias," which leaves from Terreiro do Jesus. It follows Av. Oceánica, with stops en route, and returns to Pelourinho. (Do this on weekdays only; buses are too crowded on weekends.)

A Day-Trip to Itaparica Island

Itaparica is the largest of 56 islands in All Saints Bay. It is long and narrow and encompasses 35 square miles, including 18 miles of beach. The waters around the island are warm and not particularly deep, so they are just right for swimming. The island has natural mineral springs but no bottling plant. Most local residents are farmers or fishermen. There are three major towns. **Mar Grande** is the most-visited because it has 17th-century churches, small cafés and restaurants. **Penha Cove**, one of the town's neighborhoods, has very fashionable homes

that belong to wealthy Bahians. **Villa Itaparica** has narrow streets, quiet plazas and a small harbor where some stunning yachts dock. It is also home to the 16th-century **São Lorenço Chapel**, one of Bahia's oldest churches. Look for the huge tower with a pyramid atop a stone and tile church. **Cacha-Prego** is the commercial center of Itaparica. The island's boat-building business is there.

> **TIP:** Some of the beaches have cafés and beach shacks but many visitors bring a picnic lunch. Bring your own towels, a hat and sunscreen.

Catamarans and ferries leave for Itaparica Island from Terminal São Joaquim on Av. Da Franço, near the port on Cidade Baixa. Other boats leave from the terminal in front of Mercado Modelo and from Praia Conceição, near Lacerda Elevator. The ride out to Itaparaica is beautiful and takes 45 minutes. If you rent a car, you can drive to Itaparica along BR 101 and over the Funnel Bridge.

Ferry terminal

© Bahia-Online.com

SALVADOR'S THREE "C"S

Candomblé

Macumba is the general word used to describe the African religions brought to Brazil by slaves. We have outlined the general tenets in *Faiths of Brazil*, page 8. Candomblé as practiced in Salvador has wandered less from its roots and is an open and important part of life here, more so than in Rio. As noted previously, Candomblé and its *orixás* are major exhibits in Salvador's museums, while in Rio they are apparent only on holidays and in poor neighborhoods.

© Bahia-Online.com

In general terms, the liturgy of Candomblé is broken into three parts. In the morning a sacrifice is made in a private ceremony. Later, there is communal prayer and drumming in order to get the attention of the *orixás* (gods). At the evening ceremony, in a house of worship called a *terreiro*, the ritual turns frenzied with dancing and singing as members become possessed by a specific *orixá*. Food and perfume are used to further please the gods and to encourage them to

possess some of the believers. When a person is possessed, the movements, gestures and voice changes and they speak Yorubá, a West African language.

You can attend a Candomblé ceremony, as some *terreiros* allow visitors. Remember this is a religious ceremony – dress appropriately. White is a favored color. No cameras. The *terreiro* is led by a spiritual leader – the *pãe* (dad) or *mãe* (mother) de Santo (of the saint). The Afro-Brazilian Museum and the tourist office offer a list of *terreiros* and their schedules. Since most are in poor neighborhoods, take a taxi and arrange for it to wait or return for you. You might consider visiting with a tour group. Friends tell us that **The Casa Branca Terreiro** on Av. Vasco De Gama # 463 (near Rio Vermelho) is the oldest in the city. It dates to 1836 and sometimes allows visitors.

© Bahia-Online.com

Stairway leading to Casa de Oxumaré

Capoeira

If *Capoeira* is practiced anywhere else in the world we are unaware of it. It started when slaves from different tribes were forced to work together on a sugar plantation. When fights broke out, as they often did, both participants were punished. In order to avoid

punishment, observers started to sing, dance, chant and play the *berimbou* (a crude instrument with a single metal wire that twangs). They also shook a gourd with dried seeds inside. The fighters exaggerated their movements and narrowly missed their opponents when they were observed. Gradually, the "fight" became a "sport" and then an exhibition of strength, flexibility and balance. Skilled participants can bend backwards almost to the floor while maintaining the leg movements that are the primary activity of *Capoeira*. Amateurs, some really skilled, perform in the squares of Pelourinho or Cidade Baixa, but there are schools where professionals study. They perform in the city's forts, usually on weekends. Check for performances during your visit. You can take lessons as well.

© Bahia-Online.com

Masters of Capoeira Pelé (left) and João Pequeno (right)

Carnaval

Salvador's Carnaval celebration starts on the Thursday before Ash Wednesday when the key to the city is given to the Rei Momo (Carnival King) and continues into the morning hours of Ash Wednesday. Unlike Carnaval in Rio, with opulent balls and samba school parades in a vast stadium, Salvador's Carnaval

takes place in the streets. The traditional music is *axé*, which combines African, Jamaican and Bahian rhythms and is played by the city's best known groups from atop *trios eléctricos* (electronic sound trucks) that follow a fixed circuit through the streets. Although there are big bands now, the first band had a driver and two musicians (hence trios) on a 1929 Ford.

© Bahia-Online.com
Trio Electrico

The major circuit introduced in 1950 starts at Campo Grande and follows Av. Sete de Setembro. The route takes six hours. The second circuit starts at Farol da Barra and follows Av. Océanica to Ondina. The Pelourinho Circuit does not have sound trucks but rather old-time marching bands that wend their way through the area's narrow streets. Locals pay a fee, get a printed T-shirt and shorts, and join a *bloco* so they can parade with the *trios eléctricos*. The route is marked by ropes; only members can follow inside the ropes.

The other part of Carnaval are the *barracas*, smaller bands that play on street corners

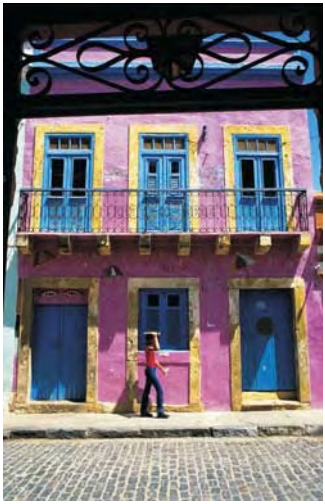
and plazas throughout the city. Some even have sound systems. Revelers sing along and dance to the music.

Some *blocos* have a following. Standouts include Os Mascarados, Timbalada and Olodum. Alerta Geral, the only *bloco* devoted to samba music rather than *axé*, draws huge crowds. Other things to watch for are the paraders in costume. The "Filhos de Gandhy" (Sons of Gandhi) dress like the Indian patriot and spray onlookers with perfume. The "As Muquiranas" are husky men dressed in mini-skirts and lipstick. The idea started when the parades went through Salvador's red light district and customers adopted local attire to march in the parades.

Carnaval ends on Ash Wednesday, and in Salvador an event called *arrastno* takes place on that day. It's one last parade with three *blocos* and three *trios eléctricos* that follow the route from the lighthouse to Ondina Beach, where there is a huge beach party.

NOTE: You will notice a heavy police presence at Carnaval events, but keep in mind that pickpockets love crowds and every event will involve them. Keep a minimum amount of money (taxi fare, a drink) in an inside pocket and tuck your room key inside your sock. Stay on the beaten track and avoid deserted streets – even at the beach communities.

HOTELS



© Christian Knepper/Embratur

There are very few hotels in Pelô (Upper City), but there are a few tired *pousadas*. Their rooms tend to be small, fan-cooled and may require that you share a bathroom. We are not recommending them. However, there is one new *pousada* that opened in 2005 in a convent that was built in 1586. It's a gem. Most visitors to Salvador stay at one of the resort hotels on beaches near the city. Most are only a 15-minute drive from Pelô. Some hotels offer shuttle bus service to the Historic City. All the resort hotels include breakfast in the room rate.

SEASONAL BOOKINGS

Although Salvador is a year-round vacation destination, hotel prices rise from Dec through March and in July. They soar during Carnaval, when there may also be a minimum stay requirement. Reserve well in advance for the best deals during Carnaval.

See page 303 for price chart.

CONVENTO DO CARMO POUSADA
Rua do Carmo 1, Pelourinho
☎ (71) 3327 8400, www.pestana.com
Expensive

The convent was built in 1586 and the *pousada* 400 years later, but the Pestana Hotel Group has done a remarkable job of retaining the convent's colonial architecture while introducing first-class amenities. The creamy-yellow walls and stone arches have been faithfully restored to match the stunning inner courtyards, the bell tower and the cloisters. The 79 guest rooms are a good size, with digital safes, Internet access, mini-bars and cable TV. They even offer a pillow menu for those who enjoy a special density. Using every bit of space, they have installed a library and reading room in the cloisters and a circular pool in one of the courtyards. It is illuminated at night. Other courtyards have garden areas, palm trees and benches so guests can relax or reflect as the Carmelite monks may have done. There is an elegant restaurant serving Portuguese fare and a bar and lounge as well. The Shishindo Spa offers

© Convento do Carmo

a wide range of treatments. Gazebos scattered throughout the property offer shade from the sun. It's easy to reflect for a few moments on what life was like for the monks and how delighted they would be to see this lovely *pousada*.

HOTEL SOFITEL SALVADOR
Rua da Passárgada, Itapuá
☎ (71) 3374-8500, www.accorhotels.com
Expensive

The Sofitel has a park-like setting on lovely Itapuá Beach near Abaeté Lagoon. The grounds are extensive and house a nine-hole golf course. The hotel has 206 rooms and suites. Rooms, decorated in muted tones, have cable TV, WiFi, mini-bars and safes. There is an outdoor pool as well as a heated indoor one, a fitness center, four tennis courts and a jogging track that offers great ocean views. A game room and lounge has snooker and ping pong tables. The informal **Oxum Restaurant** on a terrace overlooks a stocked carp pond, while the more formal **Les Saveurs d'Itapuá** serves Italian and French foods in air-conditioned comfort.

Sofitel offers shuttle bus service to Pelô.

PESTANA BAHIA HOTEL
Rua Fonte do Boi 216, Rio Vermelho
☎ (71) 2103-8000, www.pestana.com
Moderate

This is a huge hotel with over 400 rooms and suites yet the staff seems unflappable and the service first-rate. Right at the water's edge and just 15 minutes from the Historic City, rooms have ocean views from their balconies, brown and beige fabrics to complement the light woods and cable TV and mini-

There are good restaurants near the Pestana.

bars. There are two pools and a fitness center. If you prefer to sun on the sand, the hotel offers beach service. There are both casual and more formal dining options, as well as several bars and lounge areas. The business center is open seven days a week.

© Pestana Hotels

BLUE TREE TOWERS
Rua Monte Conselho 505, Rio Vermelho
☎ (71) 3330-2233, www.bluetree.com.br
Moderate

Part of a well-managed Brazilian hotel chain, this 200-room hotel is also on Rio Vermelho Beach. Rooms are modern and spacious, with light woods and yellow and beige fabrics, Internet access, mini-bars and private safes. Many have terraces. Windows face the hotel's garden areas or the ocean. There is an oddly shaped pool and sundeck, a fitness center and tennis court. A casual restaurant serves all meals, but nearby Rio Vermelho has many restaurants as well.

© Blue Tree Hotels

BAHIA OTHON PALACE HOTEL
Av. Océanica 2294, Praia de Ondina
☎ (71) 3203-2000, www.othonhotels.com
Expensive

On a cliff looking out over the Atlantic, the Othon Palace is its own little resort. It literally hugs the water and views from the 278 rooms and suites are all blue skies and water. Guest rooms are spacious with contemporary furnishings; deluxe rooms have king-size beds and a workspace. Rooms on the executive floor have fax machines and Internet access. The hotel's swimming pool seems to blend into the sea. A gym and sauna round out the facilities. You can opt for a meal at one of two restaurants – one casual and the other more formal. Both serve international and Bahian fare. The hotel is in a park-like setting and has a small outdoor stage where concerts and local musicians appear. There is a nightspot inside the hotel.

© Othon Hotel Group

RESTAURANTS

See page 303 for price chart.

Although many of Salvador's restaurants serve traditional Bahian foods such as *moqueca de siri-mole* (softshell crab stew) or *bobó de camarão* (shrimp stew), you'll find others serving Italian, French or German specialties. Many traditional dishes use

dendé (palm oil) and coconut – both of which have a lot of cholesterol. Unlike Rio, restaurants here tend to close by midnight and on average start serving at 7 pm. They are less expensive than those in Rio. Portions in traditional Bahian eateries are huge – often enough for two.

Read pages 12-17 for a description of typical dishes.

TRAPICHE ADELAIDE
Praça do Tupinambás 2, Av. Contorno, Cidade Baixa
Lunch from noon; dinner from 7 pm (closed Sun)
☎ (71) 3326 2211
Expensive

Trapiche Adelaide is on a quiet street. Have the host call for a taxi.

This is a stunning restaurant with a menu that blends Bahian and international dishes. The menu has Italian specialties (think risotto and pasta), as well as French ones (duck confit). Try the Bahian dish, shrimp in a Dijon mustard sauce. It's terrific. Have drinks before dinner while sitting on the terrace overlooking All Saints Bay. There is a very good wine list. Reserve in high season and on weekends.

© Bahia-Online.com

SOLAR DO LINHNO
Av. Contorno 8, Cidade Baixa, ☎ (71) 3329 5551
Mon-Sat, noon-midnight; closed Sun
Showtime is 10:30 pm
Expensive

Solar do Linhno is located in the servant's quarters of a 300-year-old mansion that was

once the home of a judge. Although it is on a quiet cobblestone street today, it was for a time a factory that used trains to transport the goods. The railroad tracks still remain. The restaurant has a view of the bay and is a terrific place to sample Bahian dishes, which are served buffet-style. There are international dishes on the buffet as well. Waitresses wear typical Bahian outfits and the waiters sport red vests. After dinner, a folklore show highlights African traditions that continue to flourish in Bahia.

WARNING: It bears repeating that Cidade Baixa is a commercial area and therefore dark and largely deserted after dark. Have the restaurant call a taxi for you.

MARIA MATA MOURO
Rua Inácio Acciole 8, Pelourinho
☎ (71) 3321-3929
Daily, noon-1 am
Moderate

This is a small, casual restaurant. You almost feel as if you are eating in a friend's house. Owner/chef Mouro's dishes should be called "Nouvelle Bahian" because she rarely uses palm oil, dried shrimp or coconut, which are ubiquitous elsewhere. Instead, she concentrates on fish dishes – many of them grilled and served with a ginger sauce. Salmon carpaccio is a great opener and sliced, marinated fish is served with anchovies and capers. It's akin to smoked salmon. Desserts are sweet and often feature fresh fruits. This is a popular restaurant with locals.

The house specialty at Maria Mata Mouro is badejo *(grouper).*

SORRISO DA DADÁ
Rua Frei Vicente 5, Pelourinho. ☎ (71) 3321-9642
Daily, 11 am-midnight
Moderate

Dadá, the owner/chef, is outgoing and a great self-promoter. She is also a great cook. Her restaurant has been written up by Brazilian and foreign journalists and her recipes have been featured in gourmet magazines.

© Bahia-Online.com
Dadá, above, often chats with guests.

Although similar in ambience to Maria Mouro's eatery, Dadá features lighter sauces, which means you have room to try the *casquinha de siri* (crabmeat served in a shell). Lighter is the octopus salad. Main courses are prepared in more traditional style and one course is often enough for two.

BOI PRETO
Av. Otávio Mangabeira, Jardim Armacão
☎ (71) 3362-8844.
Mon-Fri, noon-4 pm and 6:30 pm-midnight;
Sat & Sun, noon-midnight
Moderate

Meat is rarely found in Bahian food, which is heavy with fish, shellfish and vegetables. But meat is a staple of the Brazilian diet and is most popularly served in restaurants called *churrascarias*. Boi Preto, which means "Black Bull," is Salvador's most popular *churrascaria*. Over 20 meats are served *rodízio* style, circulated through the restau-

rant by skewer-toting waiters. You can eat all you want. One unusual facet here is that the skewers also hold wild boar and caimans. There is a terrific salad bar that has greens, vegetables, shellfish and a selection of sushi and sashimi platters.

MISTURA FINA
Rua Prof. Souza Brito 41, Farol de Itapuá
☎ (71) 3375-2623
Daily, 11:30 am-midnight
Moderate

Had your fill of shellfish in heavy sauces? Head to Mistura Fina, a seafood spot that serves fish without *dendé* (palm oil) and coconut, which can get tiresome. The variety here is amazing. There is *badejo* (grouper), lobster, shrimp, crab and lots of other locally caught fish prepared to your taste. Very popular is the tomato-onion sauce that is a Portuguese specialty. The emphasis is on Mediterranean-style dishes. Appetizers are served buffet-style and priced by weight. There are tables on the terrace. This is a very attractive restaurant.

Sushi

Sushi is extremely popular in Rio and Salvador, too. There are a dozen excellent sushi restaurants spread around the city. All are in the Inexpensive category. Popular ones follow:

SOHO
Av. Contorno 1010, Cidade Baixa
☎ (71) 3322-4554
Mon, 7-12 pm; Tues-Sun, noon-3 pm, 7-12 pm

TAKÉ
Av. Oceánica 3864, Rio Vermelho
☎ (71) 3332-6062
Mon-Fri, 11:30 am-3 pm, 6-12 pm; Sat-Sun, 6-11 pm

SATO
Av. Sete de Setembro 3959, Barra
☎ (71) 3264-6464
Mon, 6-12 pm; Tues-Sun, noon-3 pm, 6-12 pm

SALUTI
Av. Paulo VI 1399, Pituba
☎ (71) 3452-0009
Mon-Fri, noon-3 pm, 6 pm-midnight;
Sat & Sun, noon-11:30 pm

Serves Chinese and Thai dishes as well.

Recife & Olinda

Late in the 15th century the pope stepped in to set boundaries for Spanish and Portuguese possessions in South America. The two countries signed the Treaty of Tordesillas, but the French, English and Dutch did not abide by it and continued to stake claims to parts of the continent. The Portuguese decided to establish 15 "captaincies" to protect their interests throughout the vast wilderness that is now Brazil. Each was assigned to a captain who governed and protected it. In 1627, an area on Brazil's northeastern coast was assigned to Duarte Coelho. The area was primarily home to vast sugar plantations. Coelho searched for a spot to establish his headquarters. Standing on a hilltop overlooking the ocean and the rugged coastline, he founded his capital and named it Olinda because it was so naturally

beautiful even though the area was completely landlocked.

Olinda means "the beautiful."

Olinda prospered under Coehlo's watch, but in 1630 the Dutch successfully captured the town and burned its buildings. They transferred the seat of power from Olinda to Arrecifes (now Recife) to take advantage of its natural harbor. The city was built around three rivers so myriad bridges (49) and an intricate network of canals became its main arteries and remain so today. Although Recife flourished under Dutch rule, local plantation owners preferred Portuguese rule and, after a series of skirmishes, forced the Dutch to leave.

Recife, named for its offshore reefs, is now home to over three million Brazilians, who are primarily black-skinned. It is the capital of the state of Pernambuco and Brazil's fourth-largest city. Its most famous beach, **Boa Viagem**, four miles south of center city, resembles Rio's Copacabana, with tall modern buildings overlooking the coconut-tree-lined sand strip. Recife is a sprawling city because of the bridges and canals, but only a small part of it is of interest to visitors.

Recife and Olinda have wonderful Carnaval celebrations. They are different from those in Rio and Salvador, but exciting nonetheless.

Activities begin in December, when you can attend open rehearsals. The beats here are *frevo*, a frenzied dance that some compare to breakdancing, and *maracatus*, which resembles an old-fashioned conga. In any case, it is an experience to savor.

Jangada is the word for "fishermen."

The reefs that gave Recife its name wreaked havoc on ships attempting to dock at the city's piers. At least 12 didn't make it. They have become a divers delight and local scuba operators have well-planned outings to several of the wrecks. You don't need any prior experience to enjoy a ride on a *jangada*, those long skinny rafts that glide through the waters near Boa Viagem. Found only in Pernambuco, these boats are also typical local handicrafts.

© Fecuri/Embratur

AN ORIENTATION

Officially, downtown Recife has three district sections. **Recife Antigo** (Old), aka Recife Velho, is the part of the city that was established by the Dutch in 1630. It was largely neglected as newer sections were built, but several years ago the city fathers decided to restore its colonial buildings, repair its cobblestone streets and encourage restauranteurs and nightspot owners to open here.

Their plan worked and Recife Antigo is now a popular dining section with live music options too. They even offer free concerts in the squares. A dozen blocks around Rua do Bom Jesus are crowded with revelers, usually on weekends.

Bridges across the Capibaribe River connect Old Recife to Recife proper (**Centro**). The districts of Santo Antônio and São José share one island and are the most interesting parts of the city for visitors. They are lined by narrow streets where modern high-rise buildings stand adjacent to colonial-style churches and bustling markets. They are also commercial centers; on weekdays, you'll see well-dressed business people in the shops and restaurants.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

A key spot here is the **Praça da República** at the narrow tip of Santo Antônio. Several government buildings are located here.

Many bridges connect Santo Antônio and São José to the mainland where the districts of **Boa Vista** and **Santo Amaro** are located. They are primarily residential, but do have several museums you might enjoy.

> **NOTE:** Although Recife is quite a safe city, common sense dictates that you stick to main roads in Santo Antônio after dark, since the narrow business streets will be deserted after work hours. In Recife Antigo, stick to the dozen or so renovated areas near Ruas da Bom Jesus and Apolo. Other parts are not well lit.

GETTING HERE

Recife's international airport, Guararapes, is only six miles from the city near Boa Viagem Beach. Taxis meet all flights and you can pre-pay your ride to your hotel. Recife is a stop on both Varig's and Tam's Airpass.

Buses connect Olinda to Recife and Bom Viagem. However, taxis are faster and not very expensive.

The area lends itself to exploration. Consider renting a car to explore both Olinda and the lovely beach towns along Pernambuco's coast. **Avis** (☎ 81-3464-4106) and **Hertz** (☎ 81-3381-2104) have rental offices here, as do local companies such as **Localiza** (☎ 81-3341-2082) and **Unidas** (☎ 81-3471-1562). The concierge can make arrangements.

RECIFE'S METRÔ

Recife has a Metrô designed primarily to carry locals from residential areas to the commercial centers. But since historic Recife is so small and easy to walk, there is little reason to use the Metrô.

Buses connect Olinda, Recife and the nearby beaches. They run frequently.

The area code for this part of Brazil is 81.

CLIMATE

Although warm all year, Recife is not as humid as Rio so visiting in January and February is very pleasant. Lightweight resort wear is appropriate year-round. The dress code here is casual. Keep in mind that shorts and tank tops are frowned upon in religious buildings, such as convents and churches.

EXPLORING RECIFE

While Recife Antigo has been restored as a dining and nightlife center much like the Lapa section of downtown Rio, it has a few historic sites as well.

Sinagoga Kahal Zur Israel

Sinagoga Kahal Zur Israel on Rua do Bom Jesus 197 is the city's most important historic site. Considered the oldest synagogue in Latin America, it took years of excavating and

restoring before visitors were permitted entry. The original floor (now protected by glass) and some original walls remain and the small on-site museum explores Jewish life in Brazil. Some staff people speak English. Small entrance fee. Weekdays, 9 am-5 pm; Sat & Sun, 3 pm-7 pm.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Rua do Bom Jesus is just one block inland from the oceanfront street, Av. Alfredo Lisboa. If you look out into the Atlantic you'll see the reefs that gave Recife its name. They are about 300 feet offshore and atop one of them stands a tall green sculpture that resembles either a tulip or a phallic symbol, depending on whom you are talking to. The city's Zero Marker (where the original settlement stood) is on this shore as well.

Malakoff Tower

A block north of the synagogue on Rua do Bom Jesus you'll find **Praça Artur Oscar**, where you can relax and have a cooling respite before heading to Malakoff Tower at the plaza's northern end. Although it looks like a castle, this structure was built as an astrological observatory. No longer functioning, it has become a viewing tower. Views are unobstructed in all directions.

Fortaleza do Brum

Five blocks farther north (and not in the restored part of town) stands this Dutch-era fort, built in 1629. Its museum has old can-

1. Praça de Boa Viagem - Feira de Artesanato
2. Shopping Center Recife
3. Museu do Estado
4. Bairro das Graças - Bares & Restaurantes
5. Parque da Jaqueira
6. Cidade Velha
7. Casa da Cultura
8. Forte das Cinco Pontas
9. Forte do Brum
10. Centro de Convenções
11. Museu do Homen do Nordeste
12. Oficina Cerâmica Brennand

NOT TO SCALE

© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

non, weapons and a skeleton of a soldier who died in 1654. There's a restaurant too. Tues-Fri, 9 am-4 pm; Sat & Sun, 2 pm-4 pm.

Nearby, you'll see the historic Estaçio do Brum, which was used by the Great Western Brazil Railroad Company from 1881 to 1934.

> **NOTE:** If you plan to visit only one fort, make it **Forte das Cinco Pontas** in São José, which has been immaculately restored and hosts the City Museum. See page 419 for details.

Republic Square

Walk across the Buarque de Macedo Bridge along Av. Rio Branco from Recife Antigo to Santo Antônio. You'll find yourself in Praça da República, originally part of the estate of a Dutch nobleman. Later it became known as the "Field of Honor" to pay homage to scores of patriots who were killed here during the drive to form a republic. The buildings around the plaza were built in the 19th and 20th centuries and include the Teatro Santa Isabel (Theater) built in 1850, Palácio do Governo (Government Palace) built in 1841, and the Beaux Arts Palácio da Justiça (Court House) built in 1930.

Behind the Palácio da Justiça is one of Recife's most beautiful church complexes. **Igreja da Ordem Terceira de São Francisco**, the church, was built in 1606. The intricate Portuguese tile work is stunning. Less so is the painting of Franciscan monks being crucified. Don't miss the Capela Dourada

Opp: Republic Square © Christian Knepper/Embratur

(Golden Chapel), built in Baroque style in 1697 adjacent to the church. The altar has two levels built of jacaranda wood covered with gold, while nearby Jesus is shown hanging from a golden cross. It's quite moving. A Franciscan convent and small Sacred Art Museum are also part of the complex. The church is open daily and services are held on a regular schedule. The complex is at Rua Imperador Dom Pedro #206.

Catedral de São Pedro dos Clérigos

If you follow Av. Dantas Barreto (Santo Antônio's main street) you'll pass Recife's cathedral and its most interesting market. The cathedral was built in 1782 and has a beautiful wood façade and a painted inner ceiling.

What makes the cathedral even more interesting to visit is the cobblestone square surrounding it. Patio de São Pedro in São José is a bohemian center where musicians play folk music, artists draw and paint and poets read their poems. There are restaurants, shops and bars – all painted in pastel shades – in the square too. The Old World **Mercado de São José** is housed in a beautiful cast-iron building that was brought here from France. The stalls sell produce, herbs and local handicrafts. The market opens at

6 am daily. It's at Travessa do Macédo, São José.

Cultural Center

The city's most interesting stop is the Casa da Cultura. The structure housing the center was built as a penitentiary in the 19th century and an effort has been made to keep it historically accurate. The old cells, with their original numbers and heavy iron doors, now house shops that sell handicrafts and leather goods. One cell has been left intact so you can see how prisoners lived. The cultural center now offers exhibits and performances. Check if there are dance shows while you are here. The center is at Rua Floriano Peixoto near Santo Antônio's western waterfront.

Forte das Cinco Pontas/City Museum

Take a taxi to Forte das Cinco Pontas (Five Walls), which stood at the edge of the city when it was a Dutch colony. In typical Dutch fashion, it was built with mud bricks and had – you guessed it – five walls. In 1677 the Portuguese leveled that building and erected the four-walled fortress you see today. They left the orig-

inal name. The fort has been carefully restored and now houses the Museu da Cidade (City Museum). The museum has several rooms devoted to the Dutch colony with excellent maps and drawings. The fort, no longer at the edge of town, is at Largo das Cinco Pontas, São José. Weekdays, 9 am-5 pm; weekends, 1-5 pm. Small entrance fee.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Recife's stock exchange building is surrounded by greenery.

EXPLORING OLINDA

When Duarte Coelho was assigned a captaincy in northeastern Brazil, the area was occupied by vast sugar plantations. He wanted to establish a town to govern from and, while standing atop a hill gazing down on the ocean below, he picked his spot and named it Olinda, meaning "the beautiful." Perhaps it reminded him of Lisbon, another city built on hills. Construction started in 1535 with the most important buildings erected on hilltops overlooking the sea.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Olinda's colorful building façades are unique.

Smaller buildings were built around the lower slopes. The site clearly was not a practical choice, since the location was landlocked, but, using the wealth accumulated by plantation owners, the town prospered. That drew the attention of the Dutch, who invaded Pernambuco in 1630 and soon abandoned and burned Olinda. In its place they created Recife on drained coastal land. By 1654, the Dutch were expelled. Olinda was partly reconstructed, but it never returned to its prominence. Instead of government buildings, magnificent monasteries, convents and churches were built on the hilltops. Carmelites, Franciscans, Benedictines and Jesuits occupied the city heights and filled their buildings with some of the finest Baroque art in colonial Brazil. Because Recife flourished and became the administrative capital of the captaincy, Olinda was virtually ignored. That benign neglect allowed the city to preserve its cultural sites and, in 1937, it

1. Museum of Contemporary Art
2. Market of the Ribeira
3. City Hall of Olinda
4. Church of St. Sebastião
5. Monastery of St. Blessed
6. Church of Peter to Mártir
7. Moorish Balcony
8. Church N.S. of Carmo
9. Church of Bonfim
10. Church of Mercy
11. Convent of Conception
12. Museum of Sacred Art
13. Museum of Sé
14. Seminary of Olinda
15. Convent of San Francisco
16. Lighthouse
17. Regional Museum of Olinda

© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC

was declared an Historic City. It retained its unique design, with narrow homes, tree-lined gardens and stunning religious buildings surrounded by vegetation. In 1982, its beauty was recognized by UNESCO, which classified it as a World Heritage Site.

© Christian Knepper /Embratur

Wall mural, Olinda

The city of Olinda is not a museum. It is a living breathing, if small, city and an impressive one at that. You can easily explore the historic quarter on foot along narrow cobblestone streets that run up and down the hills and offer stunning views of the Atlantic and Recife's skyline. It's easy to get caught up in the views, but don't miss the lovingly restored homes with carved wooden balconies, stucco walls and thick wooden doors. Many are occupied by artists and musicians.

STREET KIDS NO MORE

In a unique twist, the city fathers have taken former street children, given them homes, and trained them as city guides. Look for them in Praça do Carmo. They have ID cards. Half their fee (about R $50) goes to maintain homes for street children. Check their English skills before setting out.

Carmelite Church

Start your day in Praça do Carmo. The church here, N.S. do Carmo, was built in 1588 as the first Carmelite Church in Brazil. Covered with thick moss and with parts of its façade water-logged, it has been undergoing a vast renovation. Don't miss the imposing ornate jacaranda wood altar at the heart of the church. Look for the statue of Princess Isabel in front of the church. She was responsible for abolishing slavery in 1888 and this tree-filled square is often called Praça da Abolicão (Abolition Square).

São Francisco Convent

Nearby, the Convento de São Francisco is even older. Built in 1577, it was the first Franciscan convent in the country. It is open to the public and has beautiful garden areas. N.S. da Neves chapel, within the convent, has scenes from the life of Jesus depicted in blue Portuguese tiles. The walls are constructed of crushed coral and there are frescoed ceilings. Mon-Fri, 7 am-noon, 2-5 pm; Sat, 2-5 pm.

Leaving São Francisco Convent along Rua Bispo Coutinho, you'll see an impressive building that is home to Pernambuco's Museu de Arte Sacra (**Museum of Sacred**

Art). The building dates to the 17th century when it was built as an Episcopal Palace. The works of art are not as impressive as those in the churches and convents.

Igreja da Sé

Head uphill and you'll soon find yourself at this church, which stands in a plaza named Alto da Sé. The church was built in 1537 and has been restored three times in an effort to revive its original ambience. The display of fading photographs show the history of Olinda. This is not Olinda's most impressive church, but the lure here is the plaza. It was from this scenic spot that Coelho created his city. You will appreciate his decision as you gaze out over the ocean and its reefs, to the skyline of Recife and the pockets of green-leafed trees. Added to this are the red-tile roofs, colorful buildings and church towers of lower Olinda. Take a deep breath and imagine yourself here 400 years ago. Even the bustling cafés, food stalls and shops don't intrude on the ambience.

Igreja da Misericórdia, on the same plaza, was built in 1540 and restored in 1654. This church is best known for its wood, gold and silver sculptures. It's a very peaceful spot.

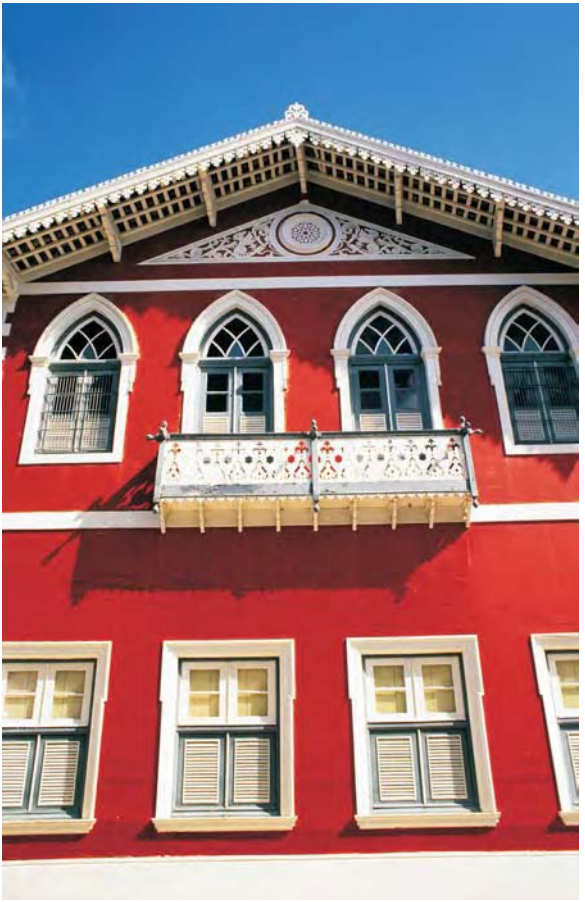
Igreja do Amparo

Continuing in the same direction, you'll come to Igreja do Amparo in the plaza of the same name. It was built in 1613 and it was also a repository for oil paintings and gold sculptures. Notice the two bell towers on this church. They are an indication that parishioners were wealthy.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Igreja do Amparo

Praça do Amparo is a quiet spot to take a break and it stands at the intersection of two of Olinda's most beautiful streets. Estrada do Bonsuccesso may be the city's oldest street. The colonial buildings here are painted in red, green, blue and yellow as they were when the city was built. The mansions display Moorish and Portuguese influences. All have balconies, latticed verandahs and graceful arches. Towering windows, known as *muxarabis*, allow you to peek inside. Rua



© Christian Knepper/Embratur

do Amparo also has narrow, brightly painted colonial buildings but you'll find cafés, restaurants, art galleries and shops in many of them. It's the perfect spot for lunch and browsing.

Ribeira Market

Rua do Amparo leads to Mercado da Ribeira, which functioned as a market and a slave auction site. These days it has lovely shops. The imposing building you see was the Olinda Senate House where Bernardo do Viera de Mello started his fight to make Brazil a republic. The street is named in his honor.

Museum of Contemporary Art

A block away is the Contemporary Art Museum, with a small, though impressive, collection. It's the building that is of most interest. Built in 1772 as the "Antiga Cadeía Eclesiástica," it was used as a prison during the Inquisition to house those who did not follow the dictates of the Catholic Church.

Mamulengo Puppet Museum

Adjacent to the art museum is this interesting detour. The puppet museum houses over 300 puppets constructed of wood and cloth

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

and dressed in typical attire of people in northeastern Brazil. Shows are based on the area's folklore. Tues-Fri, 9 am-5 pm; Sat & Sun, 10 am-5 pm.

Basílica de São Bento

Returning to the market, follow Rua São Bento to the Basílica de São Bento. Built in 1582 in Baroque style, it has a magnificent altar that was once on display in NY's Guggenheim Museum. It is a Benedictine monastery and quite beautiful. This once was home to Brazil's first law school.

The 10 am Sun mass at Basílica de São Bento features Gregorian chants.

BEACHES

Pernambuco's coast has many beautiful beaches and resort towns both north and south of Recife. Although there are a few hotels in Recife's Centro and a few *pousadas* in Olinda, you'll feel most comfortable at one of the resort hotels on the beach strips just south of Recife. Good restaurants, night options and shops are located here as well.

Pina Beach is closest to Centro, but the next strip, **Boa Viagem**, is the most popular. Although it is narrower, Boa Viagem looks very much like Rio's Copacabana Beach. The sand strip, studded with coconut palm trees, stretches for four miles. Edging the sand

Boa Viagem beach

strip is Av. Boa Viagem's wide blue sidewalk that's often filled with joggers, bikers and locals out for an evening stroll. The far side of the thoroughfare has apartment houses, hotels and cafés. If you take an early morning walk along the beach, you'll see the rocks of the reefs just offshore. You'll sometimes see fish flapping around in shallow pools of water that form here. When the tide comes in, the reefs create deeper pools of water just right for swimming. You'll see *jangadas* (hand-made rafts) glide by with their colorful sails unfurled. Although the waves beyond the reefs would make for great surfing, it is no longer permitted since sharks have been seen in those waters. There are good surfing beaches nearby.

You can arrange to sail or fish from a jangada.

Piedade Beach, the third beach strip south of the city, is a quieter version of Boa Viagem. We'll suggest hotels there.

BEACH TOWNS

After exploring Recife and Olinda, you can drive along Pernambuco's coast to visit some of the area's beach towns.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Jagandas *are available for rent at local beaches.*

NOTE: BR 101 is the highway that heads both north and south from Recife – but you should take PE 60, the state road that follows the coast so you can see the towns and beaches.

South of Boa Viagem

Gaibu – This peaceful sand strip 19 miles south of Boa Viagem has very blue waters. You can swim and surf here. The sand strip is always active with hard-fought volleyball games.

Cabo de Santo Agostinho – Three miles farther south, this is one of the areas most beautiful beaches. Swimming only. The town is fun to wander through.

Porto de Galinhas – This is a lovely resort town with resort hotels as well as low-key stops, beachfront dining and surf shops. The beach follows the curve of the bay and is lined with coconut palms and cashew trees.

Jangadas can be rented here, as can other watersports gear. Porto de Galinhas is 43 miles south of Boa Viagem and is crowded on weekends throughout the year.

Maracaípe – Locals tell us that Maracaípe is the best surfing beach in Pernambuco. The 2000 World Surfing Games were held here and lots of competitions take place on an ongoing basis. It's 45 miles south of Boa Viagem.

North of Recife

Maria Farinha Beach – This beautiful beach is very geared toward sports. You can go waterskiing and Jet Skiing, or rent motorboats and catamarans. It's a lot of fun.

Ilha de Itamaracá – Twenty-four miles north of Recife, this beautiful island has several beaches. Forte Orange may be the most attractive spot.

SCUBA DIVING

© Projecto Mar

You can dive year-round.

Recife's natural harbor and the coastal area south of the city have scores of reefs. They play havoc with ships trying to dock, and unfortunately at least 12 vessels have gone down here. On the bright side, local scuba operators have organized

dives to many of the wrecks. Some are best for novices, while others require a greater degree of competence. The wrecks are famous for their rich marine life, including turtles, schools of fish and stingrays. Night dives are spectacular.

A highly respected dive company is **Projeto Mar** in Boa Viagem, www.projetomar.com.br. Your hotel's concierge or tour desk can suggest others.

HOTELS

Your best bet is to stay in a beachfront hotel in Boa Viagem or one of its sister beaches just south of Recife. Good restaurants and night spots are located on these beach strips, and you can easily access those in Recife Antigo.

DORISOL HOTEL
Av. Bernardo Viera de Melo 1624, Piedade Beach
☎ (81) 2122-2700, www.dorisol.com
Expensive

This 12-story tower has 198 rooms with contemporary furnishings and light woods. Deluxe rooms and suites have balconies facing the ocean. There are two swimming pools, plus several lounges and bars. The informal **Acqua Restaurant** serves all three meals, while

© Dorisol Hotels

Espasço Galeria, on the roof, is a romantic eatery for dinner only.

ATLANTE PLAZA
Av. Boa Viagem 5426, Boa Viagem Beach
☎ (81) 3302-3333, www.atlanteplaza.com.br
Expensive

© Atlante Plaza Hotel

The Atlante Plaza on Boa Viagem Beach has 231 rooms and suites. There's a rooftop pool, a fitness center and the games room has pool and ping pong tables. Some guest rooms have computer facilities, Internet access and oversized desks. **The Brasserie** in the lobby serves three meals, while the **Mirage Restaurant** serves international specialties for dinner. There is a piano bar.

BLUE TREE TOWERS
Av. Bernardo Viera de Melo 550, Piedade Beach
☎ (81) 2123 4567
www.bluetree.com.br
Moderate

© Blue Tree Hotels

Part of an exclusive Brazilian hotel chain, Blue Tree Towers has 180 rooms and some duplex suites. Many rooms face the ocean and have verandahs. Colorful prints and fabrics adorn the beds

and furniture. There is a pool and fitness center and the hotel offers guests beach service. The **Nautilus Restaurant** serves all meals and there is a bar at poolside.

RECIFE PALACE
Av. Boa Viagem 4070, Boa Viagem Beach
☎ (81) 3464-2500, www.lucsimhoteis.com.br
Expensive

A slightly larger choice, the 200-room Recife Palace is guest-friendly with both a business center and a fitness one, a beauty salon and shopping arcade. It has lots of dining options. The **Basilico Restaurant** serves first-rate Italian food, and a breakfast buffet is offered in the informal lobby restaurant. The **Cap't's Table** at poolside is a good spot for lunch or an afternoon *caipirinha*.

> **NOTE:** Under the same management as Recife Palace, the **Internacional Plaza** is slightly less luxurious and also less expensive. It's at Av. Boa Viagem 3722. ☎ (81) 3464-2600, www.lucsimhoteis.com.br.

MARANTE PLAZA HOTEL
Av. Boa Viagem 1070, Boa Viagem Beach
☎ (81) 3465-1070, www.marante.com.br
Moderate

The Marante Plaza's 121 rooms are spread over six floors and all have double or king size beds, cable TV, mini-bars and safes. There's a pool, sundeck, restaurant, fitness center and the town's tennis court is right out front. A children's playground and an art gallery complete the picture. Internet access is available in the lobby.

RESTAURANTS

PORCÃO
Av. Eng. Domingos Ferreira 4515, Boa Viagem
☎ (81) 3465-3999. Tues-Sun, noon-12:30 am
Moderate

See page 303 for price chart.

You can never go wrong eating in one of Porcão's restaurants. This *rodízio churrascaria* serves the finest meats, has a sumptuous salad and sushi bar and the service is always excellent.

BUONGUSTAIO
Av. Eng. Domingos Ferreira 467, Pina Beach
☎ (81) 3327-5001. Mon-Sat, 7 pm-midnight
Moderate

A fine choice for Italian food, Buongustaio's specialty is a delicious pasta with seafood. In addition to pasta, they have beef and lamb dishes prepared Italian-style.

LEITE
Praça Joaquim Nabuco 147, São Antônio
☎ (81) 3224-7977
Lunch only, 11 am-3 pm Mon-Fri
Moderate

Founded in 1882, Leite has occupied this spot in São Antônio since 1886. A quiet oasis in bustling downtown, it has cloth-covered tables, fine china and old-world service. The menu includes steak au poivre, lots of seafood and the house specialty: roast leg of lamb.

PORTOFERREIRO
Avenida Rui 458, Graças. ☎ 3423-0854
Lunch & dinner Tues-Sat, 11:30 am-3:30 pm, 6 pm-2 am. Lunch only Sun
Expensive

This eclectic eatery is a bit off the beaten track in the residential mainland section of Graças. It is a very attractive place with an interesting menu featuring Portuguese and Italian specialties. You'll need a taxi to get here, so take the opportunity to see some of the city's residential areas.

PARRAXAXÁ
Rua Baltazar Pereiro 32, Boa Viagem
Lunch & dinner Mon-Sat, 11:30 am-10 pm
☎ (81) 3463-7874
Inexpensive

Parraxaxá serves foods of Brazil's northeastern provinces and Bahia on a large buffet, so you can sample several. The waiters sport unusual orange hats that were worn by adventurers who explored and mapped the interior of Brazil's northeast. Very informal.

OFICINA DO SABOR
Rua do Amparo 335, Olinda. ☎ (81) 3429-3331
Lunch noon-4 pm, dinner 6 pm-midnight
Moderate

This place is small and always packed because it is probably Olinda's best restaurant for local fare. Lots of lobster as well as shrimp and passion fruit with coconut sauce.

NOTE: The small restaurants in Recife Antigo don't have great staying power. Stroll along Rua Bom Jesus and check the menus posted outside.

SHOPPING

Recife Antigo and Olinda have attractive shops selling handicrafts. Shops in the beach areas sell resort wear as well.

The **Hippie Fair** is fun to visit because you never know what you'll find. It's held in the Praça da Boa Viagem weekday afternoons and all day Saturday.

There are two large **shopping centers** as well. Shopping Center Recife, in Boa Viagem, is the larger of the two. Shopping Center Guararapes, near Piedade Beach, is similar but smaller.

The Pantanal

The Pantanal is one of Brazil's, if not the world's, most spectacular regions. This long flood plain covers about 140,000 square miles, extending between two rivers in the Paraguay River Basin.

Two-thirds of the Pantanal is in Brazil.

Formed by the remains of an ancient in-land sea called Xaraes, the Panatanal is the bottom of a bowl with mountains on all sides. When it rains, the water runs down the mountains onto the Pantanal and forms the Paraguay River. The entire area is regularly flooded by the river, causing saline puddles and bogs to form (hence the name, which means "marshland"). Scattered through the region are *cordilheiras* (small hills) onto which all the wildlife of the region crowd at flood time. This creates the extraordinary sight of jaguars, caimans, capybaras and

© João Ramid/Embratur

Water buffalo in the Pantanal

cattle cohabiting somewhat harmoniously, with adversity bringing détente, The plain has small areas of savannah and even desert and it is that environment that creates a lush, watery paradise for flora and fauna, fish, waterbirds and mammals.

The Pantanal has been declared a World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO.

It's a fisherman's dream from November through March when the plain is flooded and millions of birds are attracted to the area. When the waters recede (starting in April) the land dries up and animals gather near the water holes. In the dry season, much of the land is used by cattle ranching families who've been here for generations. Some of the ranches (*fazendas*) have accommodations for tourists so you can see the wildlife and return to air-conditioned comfort, a

swimming pool and good food. Tour operators in the area work with several *fazendas*.

© Adilson Johnny Mendes Senna/Embratur

The Pantanal is home to many birds.

The perennial floods, which often destroy cattle and require the evacuation of entire towns, are the source of the area's great fertility. The floods keep the fish abundant and prevent the larger animals and birds from migrating because they never have to worry about their next meal.

The Pantanal is roughly divided into two parts, North and South. There are only small ecological differences between the two, the main distinction being the gateway towns. **Cuiabá**, capital of the state of Mato Grosso, is the northern gateway, while **Campo Grande**, capital of Mato Grosso do Sul, is the southern one. Neither town is itself a destination. In the 1970s, the government decided to build a road connecting the two towns, which are 400 miles apart. Fortunately, it was never completed for it would certainly

have upset the eco-system. But a start was made and so today we have the **Transpantaneirá**, a bare-earth road, studded with log bridges, that has ironically become a prime wildlife-viewing area. You can see flocks of macaws, herons, deer, capybaras, egrets, storks, caimans and monkeys simply wandering along the road. The Pantanal is home to 650 species of birds, 80 mammals and over 50 reptiles, including giant anacondas.

© Adilson Johnny Mendes Senna/Embratur

Capybaras

Unlike the jungle of the Amazon, which has more diversity, but is enclosed in an impenetrable cover of trees, the Pantanal allows for easy wildlife sightings. Because of the Pantanal's relative isolation, access by way of independent travel is quite difficult and you should consider taking a packaged tour. Thankfully, as tourism to the area has increased, so have the touring options. You'll need a minimum of three days and two nights to see the wildlife. Keep in mind that

animals such as jaguars, pumas, capybaras and tarantulas are seen only at night. If you want to go trekking or rafting, add a day or two to your trip. If you include rafting or canoeing on one of the area's small rivers, you might see the huge river otters and monkeys for which the Pantanal is known. Your guide will take you to the best viewing areas. Most excursions are by four-wheel-drive cars, but you can also travel on horseback. First-rate birding, trekking, canoeing, truck photo-safaris and night tours are led by multi-lingual naturalist guides. All operators work with a variety of *fazendas* (cattle ranches with accommodations) and *pousadas*.

© Editora Peixes/Embratur

A tourist stops paddling to look at a capybara

TIP: You can come to Cuiabá or Campo Grande without prior arrangements, but we suggest you make your plans well in advance.

CLIMATE & TIME ZONE

Cuiabá is Brazil's hottest city with temperatures often reaching 110° and a mean average temperature of 86°. It is hot throughout the year. October through March is the rainy

season which brings heavy downpours twice a day. Annually, the city receives 55 inches of rain.

The Pantanal is so far west that it is one hour behind Rio.

Cuiabá & The Northern Pantanal

GETTING HERE

Cuiabá's airport, **Marechal Rondon**, is about five miles from center city in an adjacent town called Varzea Grande. **Varig** (☎ 800-468-2744, www.varig.com.br), **Tam** (☎ 888-235-9826, www.tam.com.br) and **Gol** (☎ 0300 789-2121, www.voegol.com) have flights to Cuiabá from Rio and São Paulo. Taxis are the best way to get into town. Some package tours include airport transfers.

The area code for Cuiabá is 65.

EXPLORING CUIABÁ

Cuiabá is the best kickoff point for visiting the northern Pantanal, but it is not a destination itself. However, many travel arrangements dictate that you spend part of a day here before leaving for your *pousada* or *fazenda* (ranch) or upon your return.

> **IMPORTANT:** It's important to note that Cuiabá is the hottest city in Brazil so make sure that you have a hat, sunscreen and loose-fitting lightweight clothing. Stop often for cooling drinks as you stroll through the city.

The two main streets, **Av. Getúlio Vargas** and **Av. Isaac Póvoas**, are two blocks apart.

On and between them are most of the town's hotels and restaurants. Another key street is CPA or **Av. Rubens de Mendonça**, which also has restaurants and night spots.

Cuiabá does have several museums that are worth a peek. The **Rondon Museum**, also known as the Museu do Índio, has an interesting collection of weapons and instruments used by local Indians. This museum is two miles out of town on the grounds of the University of Mato Grosso.

The **Museum of Sacred Art** is located in the Church of NS do Bom Despacho in Praça do Seminário.

The Pantanal has, after Amazonas, the largest number of indigenous people in Brazil.

If you are interested in local handicrafts, make a stop at **Artindia** on Rua Pedro Celestino. It is run by FUNAI, the Brazilian Agency for Indians. Another shop that is fun to browse is **Casa do Artesão** that has works of art and crafts by local artists.

HOTELS

DEVILLE CUIABÁ
Av. Isaac Póvoas 1000, Centro
☎ (65) 3319-3000
Moderate

This glass and brass 147-room hotel is Cuiabá's only luxury stop. It is air-conditioned and has an outdoor pool. Rooms have data ports, mini-bars and safes. There is an international restaurant and a coffee shop.

LE SOLEIL
Av. São Sebastião 2622, Goiabeiras
☎ (65) 3023-0433
Moderate

This is a lovely all-suite option with 22 air-conditioned apartments. They have TV sets, data ports and full kitchens. Bathrooms are spacious but have only showers, no tubs. Children under 10 stay free with their parents.

RESTAURANTS

MORRO DE ST ANTÔNIO
Av. Isaac Póvoas 1167, Goiabeiras
☎ (65) 3622-0502
Moderate

This lively spot is often filled with locals enjoying a cold *choppe* (draft beer) on the thatch-roof covered patio. The menu is straightforward with grilled fish and steaks. It's open till 1 am.

GETÚLIO GRILL
Av. Getúlio Vargas 1147, Goiabeiras
☎ (65) 3624-9992
Moderate

Getulio's is a restaurant, beer hall and disco all in one. It serves lunch (buffet) and dinner. Offerings include *churrasco* meats and fish.

AMIGÃO
Av. Getúlio Vargas 1235, Centro
11 am-2 pm
Inexpensive

A great stop for lunch, Amigão's offers salads, meats, pastas and fish that are displayed buffet-style. You make your selections and pay by weight.

PEIXARIA POPULAR
Av. São Sebastião 2324, Goiabeiras
☎ (65) 3322-5471
Inexpensive

The town's best seafood restaurant. Sample the grilled *pintado* or *paçu*. The *piraputanga*, served as a stew or fried, is a local favorite. All dishes come with fried plaintains and *pirno*, a local grain.

DAY-TRIP

Chapada dos Guimaraes

The town and national park of Chapada dos Guimaraes are 40 miles north of Cuiabá. As you drive out of town, you'll start to see beautiful canyons and towering bright red rock formations much like those near Sedona, Arizona. Some rise to over 3,000 feet above the flatlands. Make your first stop the **Portno do Inferno** (Gate of Hell) Overlook. The chasm below was created by the Cuiabá River's erosion of the mesa. The park was created in 1989 and the town is within the park. This area is much drier than the Pantanal, but its numerous small rivers create waterfalls and from nearby overlooks you'll see lush tropical vegetation where the falls empty into the canyons below. The most prominent waterfall, **Véu de Noiva** (Bridal Veil) drops some 200 feet in a thin spindle of white spray. It is just a short walk from the park's visitor center. There are four other falls in the park as well

Véu de Noiva © Editora Peixes/Embratur

as scores of hiking trails. They are easy to find, but are not signed. Parking lots are located at the head of each trail. Five miles east of town, the **Mirante da Geodesia trail** leads to the geodesic center of Brazil. The overlook has great views of the mesa and on a clear day you can see as far as Cuiabá.

RELIABLE LOCAL TOUR OPERATORS

© Editora Peixes/Embratur

Local tour operators offer full-day trips to Chapada dos Guimaraes. Check with your concierge or at the tourist office (Sedtur) in the Praça da República.

These tour operators have been in business for years and are considered trustworthy and well organized.

Pantanal Explorer works with Araras Lodge, the premier place to stay in the northern Pantanal. In addition to wildlife viewing, they offer boat trips and a trip to the Chapada. Av. Ponce de Arruda 670, Varzea Grande. ☎ (65) 3682-2800, www.araraslodge.com.br.

Anaconda Turismo has arrangements with several *pousadas* and *fazendas* (ranches) and will set up a package for you or suggest

one of the packages they offer. Rua Marechal Deodoro 2142, Goiabeiras. ☎ (65) 3624-4142, www.anacondapantanal.com.br.

Pantanal Adventura has many interesting package tours and works with *fazendas* in many parts of the area. Rua Commandante Costa 649, Centro. ☎ (65) 3333-6352, www.pantanaladventure.com.br.

Campo Grande & The Southern Pantanal

The area code for Campo Grande and Bonito is 67.

Campo Grande became the capital of Mato Grosso do Sul in 1978 when this southern area separated from the state of Mato Grosso. Campo Grande is not a destination itself but, since the area's airport is here, it is the best kick-off point for visits to wildlife-viewing areas and the watersports action of Bonito to the south.

© Editora Peixes/Embratur

Capybara and friendly bird.

GETTING HERE

The **Aeroporto International de Campo Grande** is only five miles from center city. **Varig** (☎ 800-468-2744, www.varig.com.br), **Gol** (☎ 0300 789-2121, www.voegol.com) and **Tam** (☎ 888-235-9826, www.tam.com.br) fly here. Taxis are your best bet to get into town if you are not being met by your tour operator.

Although Avis and Hertz have rental offices here, we don't recommend driving. Roads are poorly maintained and not well signed. Virtually no one outside the towns speaks English. Stick to organized groups and sit back and watch the scenery.

EXPLORING THE SOUTH

Miranda, a town 128 miles west of Campo Grande, is where most tour operators settle their guests. There are lots of *pousadas* and *fazendas* in the area and the lush wetlands around Rio Miranda house lots of wildlife, notably the elusive jaguar. The highlights of a stay here are many, but a photo safari – called a *focagem* – is tops. This nighttime excursion is on pick-up trucks outfitted with powerful lights that stun animals for a few minutes so you can take a good look and, hopefully, a great photo.

You can avoid working with a tour operator by staying at the **Caiman Ecological Refuge**, a 100,000-acre ranch that can accommodate 79 guests. There are four distinct lodges here and two are centrally located. The other two are more remote and often

guests at Small Bay Lodge (Baiazinha) wake up to find themselves surrounded by water. The ranch offers a full range of eco- and adventure tours, including wildlife viewing on horseback, boat trips to islands in the river and the terrific *focagem* (photo safaris). The food is good too. Guests are met at the airport in Campo Grande. The ranch is 23 miles north of Miranda. ☎ (67) 3242-1450, www.caiman.com.br. Expensive.

Other tour operators house their guests in **Corumbá**, 140 miles farther west in the Pantanal wetlands. It is adjacent to Bolivia. The accommodations and amenities are not as attractive as those in Miranda. Most of the visitors here come for the fishing on the Paraguay River.

Should you have to overnight in **Campo Grande**, reserve at the **Jandaia Hotel**, Rua Barno do Rio Branco 1271, ☎ (67) 3316-7700, www.jandaia.com.br, Moderate, where all the business travelers stay. It has 130 rooms, a pool and a gym. A first-rate restaurant on the second floor serves Brazilian fare and international dishes.

© Jandaia Hotel

If you want to eat in town, try **Casa Colonial**, which is set in a colonial house and has an Italian-leaning menu. Rua Afonso Pena 3997, Moderate. It serves lunch and dinner.

DAY-TRIP

Bonito

Although it will add about 200 miles onto your trip from Campo Grande to Miranda, if you have some time and enjoy watersports, consider a detour to Bonito, a town whose name means "beautiful." It certainly is that. Arguably in the middle of nowhere (as are Campo Grande and Miranda), Bonito has become a popular eco-resort. Visitors to date have been Brazilians and foreigners whose belongings fit into a hefty backpack.

© Rui Faquini/Embratur

Fish in the clear waters of Rio Sucuri

But recently a spate of upscale resorts and *pousadas* have opened and they are drawing a more upscale crowd. People come here not to see Bonito but to splash about in the rivers and streams that rise from the bedrock with incredibly clear waters. Some move quickly enough to make for great rafting and canoeing, while others are slow enough to allow snorkelers to join

schools of colorful fish. Rafters on Rio Formoso will see lots of birds and hear the chatter of the rather large Nail monkeys that live in the adjacent forest. The trip ends at Priest's Island, which has lovely waterfalls. There are caves to explore as well.

© Rui Faquini/Embratur

A jaribu stork stretching its wings

A quirk here is that most of the attractions are on private land and visitors must come with an organized group. You can make your job easier by staying at **Zagaia Eco-Resort**, ☎ (67) 3255-5500, www.zagaia.com.br, Expensive, under the same management as the Caiman Refuge (but newer). The 70 accommodations here are in individual lodges with colorful furnishings and Indian accessories. The main building was built to resemble a Kadiwea Indian Lodge.

The Kadiwea is the largest indigenous tribe in the area.

RELIABLE LOCAL TOUR OPERATORS

Impacto Turismo Campo Grande has offices in Bonito as well. ☎ (67) 3325-1333, www.impactotour.com.br.

Open Door Turismo offers trips combining Bonito and the Pantanal. ☎ (67) 3321-8303, www.opendoortur.com.br.

N&T Japan Tour is a full-service agency that works with several hotels and *fazendas* in Bonito and Miranda. They have English-speaking naturalist guides for the Pantanal. ☎ (67) 3382-9425.

São Paulo

It may seem odd to place São Paulo, the largest city in Brazil, at the tail end of our book. There are several reasons for this. Virtually all travelers to São Paulo are here on business. The city has terrific hotels and restaurants, most geared to people on expense accounts. The downtown area has charming neighborhoods to explore, but virtually all the historic buildings and churches have been replaced by sky-

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

scrapers. São Paulo does not have the lure of Rio's beaches, Salvador's unique culture or the Amazon setting of Manaus. São Paulo is, more than anything else, a business center. It becomes apparent, when you are here, that the city's single common denominator and motivator is work.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Parque Trianon

To grasp São Paulo's dimensions, one must merely cite statistics. Eleven million people live in the 580 square miles that constitute the inner city, while over 19 million people live in the larger metropolitan area that covers over 3,000 square miles. The residents of São Paulo are called Paulistanos, while those in the surrounding state of the same name are called Paulistas. The city, a melting pot of monumental status, has almost 850,000 people of Lebanese descent and well over 1,000,000 of Japanese descent. Each is the largest such ethnic community outside the homeland. The historical center of the Japanese community is Liberdade, not far from

Centro (downtown). Three million Paulistanos are of Portuguese descent and there is an equal number of Italian descent. People of African heritage number 1.5 million and there are almost as many Germans. There are sizeable communities of Koreans, Jews, Greeks, and Eastern Europeans as well.

MANY TONGUES

Although Portuguese remains the mother tongue, it is not unusual to hear Spanish, Arabic, Korean, Japanese and Italian spoken among the various ethnic groups.

Clearly this mini-chapter cannot do justice to a city of 11 million people. If you are not a business traveler and you intend to spend more than a few days here, you should invest in a guidebook focused exclusively on the city. We offer just a feel for Centro and neighborhoods (called districts) nearby.

SOME BACKGROUND

São Paulo's roots actually start in the state of Bahia. Jesuit priests arrived in the mid-16th century and attempted to set up schools. They were largely unsuccessful and so dispatched one of their number, Father José de Anchieta, with instructions to find a new location. Heading south, he arrived on a plateau surrounded by rivers and only 35 miles from the coast. In 1554 with the help of local Indian tribes, he built a mission that was both a church and a school. He named it São Paulo (St. Paul). Two years later a new church and three convents were added. São

Paulo grew around them, but the mission town remained little known until it became the departure point for the *bandeirantes* (flag bearers). Their expeditions were designed to look for gold and gemstones, set borders for Portugal, to capture and enslave Indians and, later, escaped African slaves. They cleared trails from São Paulo into the interior and many became vital roads.

By 1725, São Paulo had grown into a small city and a needed economic boost arrived in the form of coffee. The local climate and soil were perfect for growing coffee plants and, with the arrival of a rail line, São Paulo became one of the largest coffee producers in the world. Slaves had been brought to the area to work on plantations, but when slavery was abolished in 1888, new laborers were needed. Immigration was encouraged and workers from Italy, Portugal, Spain, Germany and Japan arrived to work in both plantations and the factories springing up nearby.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Coffee barons built mansions along Av. Paulista, shown here, now the heart of the financial center.

While the city prospered, it wasn't until after WWII that it became the financial and commercial center it is today. Part of the boom can be attributed to foreign investments, especially in the manufacturing of automobiles. Ford, General Motors and Volkswagen built huge plants here, making São Paulo the center of auto manufacturing in Latin America. São Paulo has an important stock exchange and a huge financial district located on Ave. Paulista and in the historic center of town. There are specialized industries throughout the state. Money has been spent to widen streets, build colleges and cultural institutions, towering skyscrapers, and shopping and entertainment centers. But with no master plan and a haphazard approach, many buildings from São Paulo's historical past were destroyed. Today, there are few colonial buildings. The modern city has some interesting sections that can be easily explored on foot.

> **WARNING:** Stay alert for traffic, especially motorcycles that travel at high speed and weave through both moving and stalled traffic.

You'll not be surprised to learn that São Paulo has a smog problem since it has traffic jams, old buses and an industrial park on the outskirts of town.

The city code for São Paulo is 11.

The city has no beaches, but there are beaches on the coast about an hour or two away.

GETTING HERE

International flights land at **Guarulhos Airport** (aka Cumbica), 20 miles northeast of center city. The large modern airport has excellent duty-free shops, banks, car rental agencies, tourist information kiosks (get a city map) and lots of places to buy food.

Domestic flights land at **Congonhas Airport**, 10 miles south of the city. The Rio-São Paulo shuttle operates from here.

The area's third airport, **Virácopas**, is in the suburb of Campinas. It functions only for commercial aircraft, but occasionally takes passenger jets if other airports are fogged in. Passengers are then bused to São Paulo.

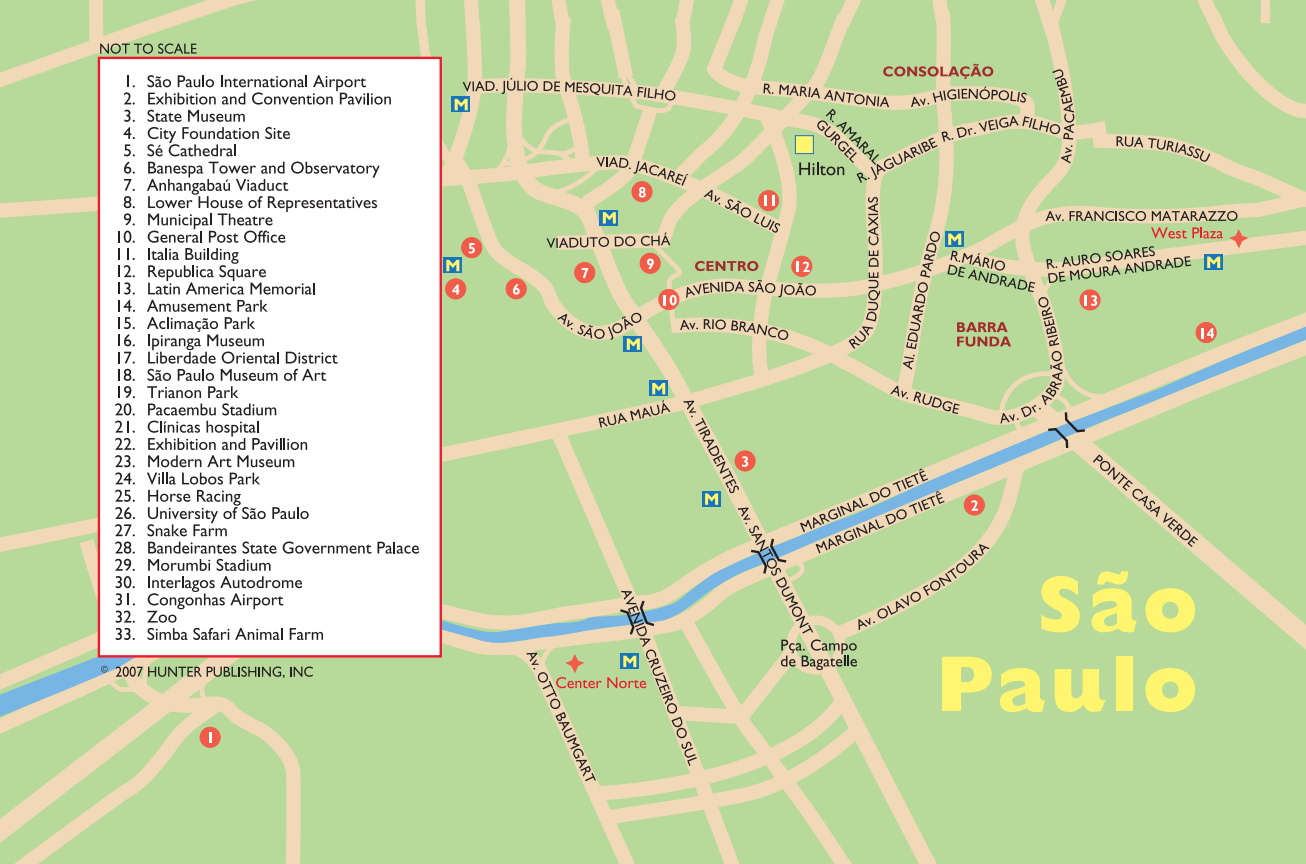
Your best bet to get to town is via pre-paid taxi service run by **Guarucoop**. You can't miss their booth. They run blue-and-white air-conditioned cars. There is also regular (Comum) taxi service from both airports. A shuttle bus (*executivo*) connects the airports as well. These are newish buses marked by green and white stripes.

GETTING AROUND

Taxis in the city are small white cars. Most are driver-owned and therefore well maintained. Their meters are based on both time and distance and there is a surcharge after 8 pm and on weekends. These taxis are not expensive.

Radio taxis, often working with a specific hotel, are useful at night. The restaurant you

INTERLAGOS
CAMPO BELO
Transamérica
Morumbi
R. JOAQUIM NABUCO
Av. ROQUE PETRONI JUNIOR
Av. MORUMBI
Av. GROVANNI GRONCHI
AVENIDA ÁGUAS ESPRAIADAS
Gran Meliá
AVENIDA MORUMBI
Av. MIGUEL ESTEFANO
RODOVIA DOS IMIGRANTES
Av. WASHINGTON LUÍS
CONGONHAS AIRPORT
RUA PADRE ANTONIO JOSÉ DOS SANTOS
AVENIDA DOS BANDEIRANTES
Av. JABAQUARA
Ibirapuera Shopping
MOEMA
Av. HÉLIO PELEGRINO
Av. LINEU DE PAULA MACHADO
Av. Dr. VITAL BRASIL
Av. VALDEMAR FERREIRA
AVENIDA INDIANÓPOLIS
Av. JUSCELINO KUBITSCHEK
Av. FARIA LIMA
Av. DAS NAÇÕES UNIDAS
MARGINAL DO RIO PINHEIROS
Av. RUBEM BERTA
Av. QUARTO CENTENÁRIO
Av. REPÚBLICA DO LÍBANO
ITAIM BIBI
Iguatemi
Av. FARIA LIMA
PINHEIROS
R. DOMINGOS DE MORAES
Sofitel
Av. NOVE DE JULHO
Av. PEDROSO DE MORAIS
R. SENA MADUREIRA
AVENIDA BRASIL
RUA COLOMBIA
R. VERGUEIRO
VILA MARIANA
JARDINS
Intercontinental
R. HENRIQUE SHAUMANN
Av. 23 DE MAIO
RUA MANOEL DE NÓBREGA
Av. BRIGADEIRO LUÍS ANTONIO
Av. NOVE DE JULHO
AVENIDA REBOUÇAS
R. DOMINGOS DE MORAIS
RUA OSCAR FREIRE
SUMARÉ
RUA VERGUEIRO
ALAMEDA SANTOS
Sheraton
Renaissance
ALAMEDA SANTOS
Paulista
Av. Dr. ARNALDO
R. HEITOR PENTEADO
AL. CAMPINAS
RUA PAMPLONA
Av. NAZARÉ
RUA TREZE DE MAIO
Maksoud
RUA AUGUSTA
RUA HADDOCK LOBO
R. DO PARAÍSO
RUA CORONEL DIOGO
RUA VERGUEIRO
Av. VINTE E TRÊS DE MAIO
BELA VISTA
RUA FREI CANECA
RUA DA CONSOLAÇÃO
Av. ANGÉLICA
AVENIDA SUMARÉ
LIBERDADE
Caesar Park
PACAEMBÚ
Metro
Shopping
NOT TO SCALE


NOT TO SCALE
1. São Paulo International Airport
2. Exhibition and Convention Pavilion
3. State Museum
4. City Foundation Site
5. Sé Cathedral
6. Banespa Tower and Observatory
7. Anhangabaú Viaduct
8. Lower House of Representatives
9. Municipal Theatre
10. General Post Office
11. Italia Building
12. Republica Square
13. Latin America Memorial
14. Amusement Park
15. Aclimação Park
16. Ipiranga Museum
17. Liberdade Oriental District
18. São Paulo Museum of Art
19. Trianon Park
20. Pacaembu Stadium
21. Clínicas hospital
22. Exhibition and Pavillion
23. Modern Art Museum
24. Villa Lobos Park
25. Horse Racing
26. University of São Paulo
27. Snake Farm
28. Bandeirantes State Government Palace
29. Morumbi Stadium
30. Interlagos Autodrome
31. Congonhas Airport
32. Zoo
33. Simba Safari Animal Farm
© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC
VIAD. JÚLIO DE MESQUITA FILHO
R. MARIA ANTONIA
CONSOLAÇÃO
Av. HIGIENÓPOLIS
R. AMARAL GURGEL
R. JAGUARIBE
R. Dr. VEIGA FILHO
Av. PACAEMBU
RUA TURIASSU
Hilton
VIAD. JACAREÍ
Av. SÃO LUIS
VIADUTO DO CHÁ
CENTRO
AVENIDA SÃO JOÃO
RUA DUQUE DE CAXIAS
Al. EDUARDO PARDO
R. MÁRIO DE ANDRADE
Av. FRANCISCO MATARAZZO
West Plaza
R. AURO SOARES DE MOURA ANDRADE
Av. SÃO JOÃO
Av. RIO BRANCO
BARRA FUNDA
Av. RUDGE
Av. Dr. ABRAÃO RIBEIRO
RUA MAUÁ
Av. TIRADENTES
MARGINAL DO TIETÊ
Av. SANTOS DUMONT
PONTE CASA VERDE
AVENIDA CRUZEIRO DO SUL
Av. OLAVO FONTOURA
Av. OTTO BAUMGART
Center Norte
Pça. Campo de Bagatelle
São Paulo

dine in can call one for you at the end of your meal.

> **TIP:** Get the name and phone number of the radio taxi from your concierge and carry it with you.

São Paulo has a clean, comfortable **Metrô** that is safe to use in the daytime. Although it is more extensive than Rio's Metrô, it does not reach all areas of the city. There are three lines and transfers between them are free. Trains run from 5 am-midnight. It's a fast way to move from one part of the inner city to another when there are monumental traffic jams in the streets above.

> **WARNING:** Stay alert for pickpockets on the Metrô and on buses, especially when exiting. Don't carry any valuables with you.

The city has an extensive **bus** network that reaches every part of the city. However, buses are almost always overcrowded, which makes them prime stomping grounds for pickpockets. Bus stops and the vehicles themselves are well signed. You enter buses from the rear; be sure to have small change. Do not get in a bus unless you see empty seats. Stay aware of your surroundings, especially when exiting.

WEATHER & CLOTHING

São Paulo is south of the Tropic of Capricorn and is not as hot or humid as Rio. In winter, temperatures can fall into the 40s at night.

Stick to lightweight comfortable resort wear and bring a sweater or lightweight jacket for evenings.

Paulistanos wear more formal attire than Cáriocas. The financial centers are crowded with men in business suits and ties and women in lightweight suits and dresses. Casual chic is appropriate at dinner. Ties are rarely worn at night.

EXPLORING CENTRO

When São Paulo was founded in 1554, it was on a plateau between two rivers, the Tamanduatei and the Anhangabaú. The Jesuits lived on the hilltops, while other people settled in the valleys below. The eastern shore of the Anhangabaú River (now a highway) is where the oldest sites, if not the oldest buildings, stand. Locals refer to it as **Centro Velho** (old).

Start your day at the **Praça da Sé**, where the Metropolitan Cathedral stands. This building dates only to 1954 but several churches have stood in this plaza since the city was founded. Small streets radiating from this plaza intersect and cross at odd places, rather like those

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Some say Rua Diréita was the city's first street.

in New York's Greenwich Village. Two old streets are **Rua Diréita** and **Rua São Bento** (its Basílica has an organ with over 6,000 pipes).

Some sites of interest nearby include:

São Francisco Church

Igreja São Francisco is one of the few Portuguese colonial buildings still standing. It was built between 1647 and 1790 in Baroque style. Today, two churches are located here – one run by Catholic clergy and the other by lay brothers. This church honors St. Francis of Assisi.

Pátio do Colégío

This square is where Fathers Anchieta and Nóbrega built their mission school. Several years later they built a larger church, called Colégio, which was torn down. City fathers soon realized their error and in 1896 built this new church in the same style as Colégio. The **Father Anchieta Museum** here has some historic and religious paintings. It's open Tues-Sun, 9 am-5 pm. The church has a 10 am mass on Sunday. The plaza is near Rua Boa Vista, north of Praça da Sé.

Pátio do Colégio

Downtown São Paulo
RUA JAGURIBE
R. MARTINICO PRADO
R. DONA VERIDIANA
R. AMARAL GURGEL
RUA REGO FREITAS
RUA AURORA
Av. SÃO JOÃO
Av. RIO BRANCO
VD S. EFIGÊNIA
Av. PRESTES MAIA
R. 25 DE MARÇO
Praça da República
R. MARQUES DE ITU
Av. HIGIENÓPOLIS
AVENIDA ANGÉLICA
R. GEN. JARDIM
AVENIDA IPIRANGA
R. 24 DE MAIO
Av. SÃO JOÃO
R. MARANHÃO
R. MAJ. SERTÓRIO
R. 7 DE ABRIL
Anhangabaú
RUA SÃO BENTO
R. 15 DE NOVEMBRO
RUA PIAUÍ
R. ITAMBÉ
R. MARIA ANTONIA
Av. SÃO LUIS
VD. DO CHÁ
R. ALAGOAS
R. A. PENTEADO
R. GEN. CARNEIRO
R. DA CONSOLAÇÃO
R. SERGIPE
R. CAIO PRADO
R. MARTINS FONTES
VD. 9 DE JULHO
R. DIREITA
R. MATO GROSSO
RUA M. PARANAGUÁ
Praça da Bandeira
R. DA CONSOLAÇÃO
Av. 9 DE JULHO
Av. 23 DE MAIO
R. BELA CINTRA
RUA AUGUSTA
R. RUI BARBOSA
R. STO. ANTONIO
RUA MARIA PAULA
Praça da Sé
R. JOÃO MENDES
R. FREI CANECA
© 2007 HUNTER PUBLISHING, INC
NOT TO SCALE

Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil

The former home of the Bank of Brazil has become a movie theater and cultural center that has art exhibits and dance and theater productions. Check schedules for the time of your visit. Tues-Sun, noon-6:30 pm. Rua Álvares Penteado 112.

São Paulo Stock Exchange

You'll need a photo ID to enter the stock exchange and Edificio Banespa.

The Bovespa is one of the most influential exchanges in the world. You can observe it in action and check your own portfolio while here. Weekdays, 10 am-1 pm, 2-4:30 pm. Rua 15 de Novembro 275.

Edificio Banespa

This all-white 36-story building offers panoramic views of Centro and looks like New York's Empire State Building. Weekdays, 9 am-6 pm. Praça Antônio Prado.

Edificio Martinelli

Most of the city's skyscrapers were built in the boom years after WWII, but the city's first skyscraper, the 36-story Martinelli Building, was built in 1929. It too offers city views from its roof. Weekdays, 10:30 am-4 pm. Av São Jono 35.

As you walk through Centro Velho, you'll be aware of the hum of traffic. Those sounds and blaring horns are rising from the highway that was built in the Anhangabaú River bed. Since the city was built on both banks of that river, two viaducts were built over it, as

was **Parque Anhangabaú**, a civic plaza and park that spans the highway. It is a half-mile long and beautifully landscaped. It's a good spot to take a break before crossing into the other part of the historic center called Nova Centro (New Centro). You can walk across Parque Anhangabaú or one of the high viaducts – the pedestrian-only Via St. Ifigênia, north of the plaza and Viaduto do Chá, south of it.

Teatro Municipal

The beautiful building you see at the fringe of the plaza is the Teatro Municipal, which looks like its counterpart in Rio (both modeled after the Paris Opera). Built in the early 1900s, it hosts international and local opera and ballet companies. Unfortunately, you can't visit unless you have tickets for a performance. Praça Ramos de Azevedo, ☎ 11-222-8698. Tickets are available at the box office, ticket booths throughout the city and via your hotel's concierge.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

Continue walking west. You can follow Av. 7 de April or 24 de Maio, but a personal favorite is **Barão de Itapetininga**, a pedestrian-only street (as are several others in this part of town). It has lots of shops to browse and lots of street vendors too.

© Christian Knepper/Embratur

São Paulo has many parks and gardens

Praça da República

Cross Av. Ipiranga (carefully!) and you'll find yourself in Praça da República (Republic Square). This is where the **Hippie Fair** (arts and crafts, see page 123 for details) is held on Sunday. Many artisans display their wares on other days as well, and there are often street musicians. As you look around the plaza and continue your walk, notice that the buildings look newer and that residential buildings are mixed in with commercial ones. The most attractive building here is **Edificio Itália**, which offers terrific views from its 41st-floor restaurant. You must dine or drink to enter the restaurant; a drink at sunset seems to be the best option. The bar opens at 6 pm. Av. Ipiranga 336.

Edificio Itália

ETHNIC SÃO PAULO

Just south of the Praça da Sé are two interesting ethnic neighborhoods that took shape early in the 20th century as large numbers of immigrants arrived in São Paulo.

Liberdade

Liberdade got its name after 1888 and the abolition of slavery. The area's main square was until then the site of the city's whipping posts (*pelourinhos*), where escaped slaves and other transgressors were punished. When it was renamed Praça da Liberdad, the area also took that name. A working class neighborhood, Liberdad is home to the largest Japanese community outside Japan. Although many second- and third-generation Japanese Brazilians are quite wealthy and successful, they still live in the area where they grew up. You'll know you've found it when you spy the red porticos that mark the entrance way. Beyond them are pagoda-shaped buildings and street lamps that resemble Japanese lanterns. It's fun to shop in the small stores that seem to import everything from Japan. There are good restaurants and tea shops too. The best day to visit is Sunday, when Praça Liberdad hosts a fair selling Asian foods and attractive handicrafts. Combine that with a visit to the Museu da Imigracão Japonesa (**Museum of Japanese Immigration**). Exhibits trace the history of the community in São Paulo and the community's contributions to Brazilian society. Tues-Sun, 1:30-5:30 pm. Rua São Joaquim 381.

Bela Vista

Adjacent to Liberdade (southwest) is Bela Vista, which locals refer to as Bixinga. This is São Paulo's Italian quarter and has the res-

taurants to prove it. Browse the shops and notice the well-kept homes and well-tended gardens. There's a lot of pride here.

Make a stop at the **Museu Memória do Bixiga**, which traces the Italian immigrant experience in São Paulo. Wed-Sun, 2-5 pm. Rua dos Ingleses 118. A weekend fair here has less food and more handicrafts and antiques than the one in Liberdad. It's in Praça Dom Orione.

THE FINANCIAL DISTRICT

Av. Paulista is the face of São Paulo's financial district. Skyscrapers housing the city's banks and businesses have spread all around this street, which once housed coffee barons and early industrialists. You'll notice that the pace quickens here and is more like Wall Street's than Copacabana's. The financial district has several exclusive hotels, lots of excellent dining spots and several cultural centers that offer art exhibits and classical music. The most attractive center is **Casa das Rosas** (House of Roses) at #37. Built by a French family in 1935, it remained their home till 1986 when the city purchased it and created the center.

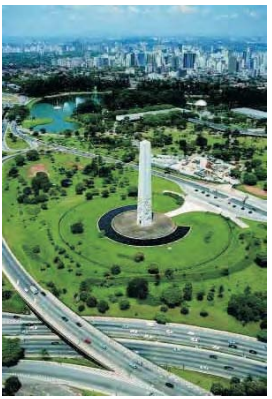
Check exhibits and show schedules at Casa das Rosas with your concierge.

The city's **Fine Arts Museum** (MASP) is also on Av. Paulista, at #1578. It displays works by Renoir, Van Gogh and Degas, along with works by well-known Brazilian artists. An antiques fair is held in the promenade below the museum on Sundays. Tues-Sun, 11 am-6 pm.

JARDIMS

Jardims is the Portuguese word for gardens. Here, it refers to a series of upscale residential areas that were built in the 1920s and delineated from Centro and Av. Paulista by their greenery. Names change frequently, but include Jardim Paulista, Jardim Europa and Jardim America. There are good restaurants in the Jardim areas as well as the city's most fashionable shopping street – **Rua Oscar Freire**.

Ibirapuera Park



Ibirapuera Park is only a 10-minute taxi ride from the downtown area. Ask your taxi driver to leave you at Park Gate 10. The park houses the city's **Museum of Modern Art** (MAM) and the **Planetarium**. Hours for both: Noon-6 pm; closed Mon. Although far smaller than NYC's Central Park, Ibirapuera provides the same respite from big city noises. Designed by Oscar Niemeyer for the city's 400th anniversary, it is marked by small lakes, complete with gliding ducks, beautifully maintained lawns, jogging and bicycling paths and a stage where outdoor performances are given.

When the park opened it featured several exhibit pavilions, some of which remain today. Don't miss the Japanese Pavilion, which is an exact replica of the Imperial Palace in Kyoto. It was built in Japan, then shipped and reconstructed here. It sits beside a small man-made lake in a Japanese-style garden. There are exhibits of samurai clothing, pottery and sculptures inside, but it is the setting that makes it so special. It is near Gate 10. Open weekends and holidays.

There are lots of tree-shaded benches in Ibirapuera.

Butantá Snake Institute

In 1888, a Brazilian scientist turned a farmhouse on the grounds of the University of São Paulo into an institute for the purpose of preventing deaths from snake bites. It now distributes vaccines and related products throughout Brazil and runs a hospital that offers free treatment to victims of venomous animal bites.

> **NOTE:** Although on the grounds of the university, the institute has its own entrance marked "Serpentario."

Visitors can view thousands of snakes, spiders and scorpions in pens on the institute's grounds. You can watch feeding time (live frogs and hamsters are food) and watch venom being extracted. Check schedules for the above activities. Tues-Sun, 9 am-4:30 pm. Small entrance fee. Rua da Reitoria 109, Pinheiros.

A MELTING POT

The university, the country's largest, is quite modern and spread out. The main branch of the city's Modern Art Museum is on its extensive grounds. As you walk around, you'll be treated to good city views. Looking at the students, you'll appreciate what a true melting pot São Paulo is.

HOTELS

SOFITEL SÃO PAULO

Rua Sena Madureira 1355, Ibirapuera
☎ (11) 5574-1100, www.accorhotels.com
Deluxe

At Sofitel, ask for a room with a view of the park.

Located across from Ibirapuera Park, this elegant hostelry is known for its French flair and A-1 service. There are several categories of rooms and suites. All are spacious, with dark wood furnishings and comfortable sitting areas. You'll appreciate the extra work space. The hotel has an outdoor pool and tennis courts as well as a health club and business center. The restaurants serve French food. The location allows you to jog in the park if you enjoy early morning running. Breakfast is not included in the hotel rate but you

© Accor Hotels

can opt for coffee and freshly baked bread or pastry from the lobby bakery.

INTER-CONTINENTAL SÃO PAULO
Alameda Santos 1123, Jardims
☎ (11) 3179-2666, www.interconti.com
Deluxe

This is a lovely stop in a bustling city. It has 160 rooms and over 30 suites decorated with pale shades and pastels, set off by marble floors and jacaranda wood furniture. Rooms have cable TV and irons. Hotel facilities include an outdoor pool, a health and fitness center and a full business center. The **Tarsila Restaurant** serves an eclectic menu and there are comfortable bar and lounge areas as well.

MAKSOUD PLAZA
Alameda Campinas 150, Jardims
☎ (11) 3145-8000, www.maksoud.com.br
Expensive

Although no longer the city's premier hotel, the Maksoud Plaza still lures its share of bold-faced names with its over-the-top facilities. It all starts with the atrium lobby that soars for 22 stories and has fountains, shops, restaurants, panoramic elevators and a sculptured solar ceiling. That permits indoor garden areas and hanging plants to

© Maksoud Hotels

flourish. With over 400 rooms and suites, it has a number of room options. All have several phone lines, Internet access, mini-bars, TV sets and safes. There are four restaurants and an equal number of bar/lounges. The restaurants include a brasserie and a pizzeria that are open 24/7. The **Trianon Bar** has piano music each night. There is an indoor heated pool and a health club, as well as a roof-top lounge with great views.

BLUE TREE TOWERS PAULISTA
Rua Peixoto Gomide 707, Cerqueira César
☎ (11) 3147-7000, www.bluetree.com.br
Expensive

This is another fine hotel from our favorite Brazilian chain. If you go to their website, you'll find a score of Blue Tree Towers throughout the city. You probably can't go wrong with any of them, but we've selected this one because it is only a block from Av. Paulista and adjacent to the city's Museum of Art. It is also surrounded by shopping centers. The 256 rooms all have small terraces, several telephone lines, data ports, small cable TV sets and large workspaces. Some floors are non-smoking and some rooms are wheelchair-accessible. There is a covered and heated pool as well as a fitness center and a

© Bluetree Hotels

business center. The restaurant often has themed buffets at dinner (i.e., Italian night) and the sushi restaurant serves Japanese breakfasts.

RESTAURANTS

An enormous number of fine restaurants are located throughout the city. Since São Paulo is a city of immigrants, it has a great many ethnic restaurants owned by second- and third-generation families. We offer some suggestions below, but if you head to the upscale residential areas of Higienópolis (west of Centro) and the Jardims (southwest of Centro) you'll find scores of cafés and restaurants.

The most popular dinner hour is 9 pm.

ANTIQUARIUS
Alameda Lorena 1884, Cerqueira César
☎ (11) 3064-8686
Lunch & dinner from 7 pm; no lunch Mon
Very Expensive

This is São Paulo's finest Portuguese restaurant and an elegant choice for a special dinner. Many of the specialties are seafood, and those using codfish are notable. The most popular dish is *açorda* – crab, shrimp and mussels baked in a clay pot and topped with a fried egg. There are beef and lamb dishes too.

ARABIA
Rua Haddock Lobo 1397, Cerqueira César
☎ (11) 3061-2203
Lunch 2-3 pm weekdays; dinner 7 pm-midnight; Saturday & Sunday, noon-midnight
Moderate

With such a large Lebanese community you should expect fine Lebanese food – and, if

you head to Arabia, you'll find it. This attractive restaurant has a menu that changes frequently. There are always specials, but we enjoy the tasting menu, which offers small portions of several specialties. Arabia has an outstanding *mezze*, or appetizers, many of which include eggplant or hummus. They're great with a cocktail. There are lots of lamb dishes on the menu.

CARLOTA
Rua Sergipe 753, Higienópolis
☎ (11) 3661-8670
Lunch Tues-Sun, noon-4:30 pm; dinner Mon-Sat, 7:30 pm-midnight
Very Expensive

This is the sister restaurant of Carla Pernambuco's popular eatery in Rio. She has an eclectic menu that changes frequently and daily specials are listed on a blackboard. Many of the dishes are Italian but use Brazilian ingredients that subtly change the flavors. Ravioli are filled with cheese and vegetables, and the grilled shrimp are served on fried rice with vegetables. The food is outstanding and the service unhurried.

Carlota does not take reservations, so expect to wait.

FAMIGLIA MANCINI
Avanhandava 81, Centro
☎ (11) 3256-4320
11 am-1 am
Expensive

No reservations are taken at Famiglia Mancini

This looks like a neighborhood trattoria found in Italian neighborhoods all across the US. You'll find tables covered with red and white checkered cloths, Chianti bottles hanging from the ceiling and standing on shelves and lots of ornaments. It's quite ca-

sual. There's a terrific antipasto buffet where you can heap your platter with cold ham, olives, cheeses and salads. It has lots of pastas and at least 20 sauces to select from. They also serve lasagna. Portions are huge, so consider sharing a main course.

SUSHI YASSU
Rua Tomas Gonzaga 98, Liberdade
☎ (11) 3209-6622
Tues-Sun,11:30 am-2:30 pm, 6 pm-11:30 pm
Moderate

This family-owned restaurant in Liberdad draws many diners who live in the area. Offerings include sushi and sashimi dishes, as well as some unusual seafood options like eel and sea urchins.

A FIGUEIRA RUBAIYAT
Rua Haddock Lobo 1738, Cerqueira César
☎ (11) 3063-3888
Tues-Fri, noon-3:30 pm, 7 pm-midnight;
Sat & Sun, noon-midnight
Expensive

Arguably the most lovely restaurant in São Paulo, A Figueira Rubaiyat is built around a wonderful old fig tree (*figueira* means fig). You can select an open-air table in the gazebo that encircles the tree or one in the indoor dining room. This is an old-fashioned steak house and not a *rodízio*. Your steak or lamb chops are prepared to order. The beef, lamb and even the chickens are raised on the owner's cattle ranch. There are many fish and shellfish dishes on the menu as well. On Thursdays and Saturdays, there is a *feijoada* buffet at lunch.

PIOLA
Inexpensive

This avant-garde pizza joint offers scores of pizza toppings and very thin crusty pies. It draws a young crowd. There are a handful of Piolas in the city. Two popular ones are at Rua Oscar Freire 512, Jardims, and at Praça Vila Boim 49, Higienópolis, near the Museum of Brazilian Art (FAAP).

YELLOW GIRAFFE
Praça Vila Boim 73, Higienópolis
Inexpensive

Branches of the Yellow Giraffe chain serve great burgers and are known for their *beirutes*, which are sandwiches served on pita. There are lots of salads too.

BURGUER & BISTROT
Rua Bela Cintra 1693, Jardim Paulista
☎ (11) 3062-0643. Daily, noon-midnight
Inexpensive

American-style burgers are the biggest sellers, but good sandwiches and salads are available too.

Index

A

Accommodations: *Brasília, 362-364; Búzios, 293-294; Campo Grande, 451; Cuiabá, 444-445; high season, 198; Iguaçu Falls, 342-344; long-term stays (Rio), 231-232; Manaus and Amazonia, 320-331; Petrópolis, 288; price scales, 198-199, 303; Recife, 433-435; Rio, 195-232; Salvador (Bahia), 399-403; São Paulo, 474-477*

Adventure tours, *148-149*

After dark, *see Nightlife*

Airlines, *34, 42-43, 55*

Airpass, *301-302*

Air tours, *flightseeing, 149*

Amado, Jorge, *379-380*

Amazonia, *308; accommodations, 320-331; dining, 331-332; exploring, 316-320; packing for, 309; tour operators, 320, 330-331; vaccinations, 301*

Amazon Rainforest, *304-305*

Amazon River, *304; cruises, 329-330; Meeting of the Waters, 305, 317-318*

Anavilhanas Archipelago, *318-319*

Antiques fairs, *271-272*

Arco de Teles, *Rio, nightlife, 238*

Armacão de Búzios, *289-296*

B

Barra da Tijuca, *76-77; beach, 86, 142*

Beaches: *bus, 87; Búzios, 290-292; dining, 292; Paquetá Island, 89; pollution, 83; Recife and Olinda, 429-432; Rio, 80-87; Salvador (Bahia), 391-392; soccer, 138; surfing, 141-142; tips, 82; volleyball, 138*

Bicycling, *138; Búzios, 293*

Bird-watching, *Pantanal, 300, 441-442, 453*

Boating, *144-145; Amazon cruises, 329-330;*

Guanabara Bay cruises, 90-91
Bonito, *452-453*
Bookstores, Rio, *55, 285*
Botafogo, Rio, *69; beach, 83*
Botanical gardens*: Rio, 133-135; São Paulo, 472*
Boticário Plaza, Rio, *117*
Brasília, *297, 299, 345-366; accommodations, 362-364; climate, 349; dining, 364-366; Eixo Monumental East, 352-361; Eixo Monumental West, 361; exploring, 351-361; Historical Mus eum, 359-360; map, 350; Metropolitan Cathe dral, 353-355; shopping, 366; tourist information, 349; transportation, 348-349*
Brazil: *Airpass, 301-302; food, 12-17; gemstones, 29-32, 79-80; geography, 23-28; getting here, 33-35; history, 17-22; holidays, 28-29; languages, 11-12; map, 26-27; music, 232-233; people, 6-11; religion, 7-11*
Buses: *beach stops, 87; national system, 302; Rio, 50, 52-53; surfing stops, 142*
Butantá Snake Institute, São Paulo, *473*
Búzios, *289-296*

C

Caiman Ecological Refuge, *450-451*
Campo Grande and Southern Pantanal, *440, 449-454; accommodations, 451; area code, 449; Caiman Ecological Refuge, 450-451; day-trip to Bonito, 452-453; dining, 451; exploring, 450-451; getting here, 450; tour operators, 454*
Capoeira, *395-396*
Carmen Miranda Museum, Rio, *116-117*
Carnaval: *background, 151-152; balls, 153-154; bands and street dancing, 152-153; pickpockets and crime, 153; Recife and Olinda, 409-410; rehearsals, 156, 256-257; Rio, 149-157; Salvador (Bahia), 369, 380, 396-398; samba school parades, 155-157; tickets, 157; today, 152-154*

Changing of the guard, Rio, *131*
Chapada dos Guimaraes, *446, 448*
Children, theme parks, *136-137*
Christ the Redeemer statue, *77, 78, 91-92*
Cinelândia, Rio, *67, 107; Carnaval, 152-153*
Contemporary Art Museum, Rio, *113-114*
Copacabana, Rio, *70-72; beach, 85, 138; Carnaval, 152; Fort and Army History Museum, 120-121; map, 71*
Corcovado Mountain, *77, 91-94*
Cosme Velho, Rio, *70*
Cuiabá and Northern Pantanal, *440, 443-449; accommodations, 444-445; area code, 443; day-trip to Chapada dos Guimaraes, 446, 448; dining, 445-446; exploring, 443-444; getting here, 443; tour operators, 448-449*
Customs information, *34-37; embassies and consulates, 36-37, 43; entry/exit card, 37; entry requirements, 35-37; shopping, 263-264; visas, 35-36*

D

Departure taxes, *43*
Dining: *advice and etiquette, 159-161; Bahian traditional dining (Rio), 183-185; beaches, 292;* botequims *and* botecos *(Rio), 189-192; Brasília, 364-366; Búzios, 294-295; Campo Grande, 451;* churrascarias *(Rio), 171-175; cover charge, 161; Cuiabá, 445-446; dress code, 160; ethnic and eclectic dining (Rio), 175-180; food, 12-17, 158-159; French restaurants (Rio), 163-166, 177; Iguaçu Falls, 344-345; Italian restaurants (Rio), 166-169; Japanese and sushi (Rio), 180-182; juice bars (Rio), 194-195; lighter fare (Rio), 185-189; Manaus and Amazonia, 331-332; payment, 160; Petrópolis, 288; Portuguese restaurants (Rio), 161-163; price scales, 161, 303; Recife, 436-437; reservations, 161; Rio, 157-195; Salvador (Bahia),*

403-408; Santa Teresa, 111; São Paulo, 477-480; seafood restaurants (Rio), 170-171; service charge, 160; tipping, 45; vegetarian and salad bars (Rio), 192-194
Disabilities, travelers with, *39, 41*
Driving, *53-54; car rentals, 53-54; International Driving Permit, 54; and parking, 53; people hired to watch your car, 63; traffic warning, 458*

E

Ecological tours, *148-149*
Electricity, *43*
Embassies and consulates, *36-37, 43*

F

Figas (good luck charms), *7*
Fiscal Island (Ilha Fiscal), *108*
Fishing, *144*
Flamengo, Rio, *69; beach, 83; Flamengo Park, 130-131*
Food, *12-17, 158-159; drinks, 16-17; fruits, 16; ice cream (Rio), 195; Manaus market, 313; see also Dining*
Futebol, *145-146*

G

Gavea Rock, *75-76*
Gay and lesbian travel: *beaches, 85; nightlife (Rio), 248-250*
Gemstones, *29-32, 79-80, 272-273*
Geography, *23-28*
Glória, Rio, *68-69*
Golf, *140*
Good luck charms, *7, 262-263*
Guanabara Bay: *beaches, 83; cruises, 90-91*

H

Hang-gliding, *140-141*
Health and safety, *38-41; beach tips, 82; drinking water, 38-39; hiking alone, 128; IAMAT website, 38; pickpockets and crime, 52, 53, 63, 96, 111, 128, 462; Tourist Police, 59, 63; traffic warning, 458; vaccinations, 301*
Hiking: *Búzios, 293; Chapada dos Guimaraes, 448; Rio area,*

139; safety tip, 128; Tijuca, 93, 128, 139
Hippie Fairs*: Recife, 438; Rio, 123-124, 270; Salvador (Bahia), 374; São Paulo, 469*
Holidays, *28-29*
Horseback riding, Búzios, *293*
Horse racing, *146*
Hotels, *see Accommodations*
H. Stern Museum, Ipanema, *31, 79-80, 114-116, 273; restaurant, 176-177; shopping, 272-273*

I

IAMAT, *38*
ID requirement, *35*
Iguaçu Falls, *299, 333-345; accommodations, 342-344; dining, 344-345; exploring Argentinean side, 340-342; exploring Brazilian side, 338-339; getting here, 336; map, 337; tourist information, 338; zodiac rides, 339, 341-342*
Indian Museum, Manaus, *315-316*
Indian Museum, Rio, *118*
Internet access, Rio, *58-59*
Ipanema, *72-74; beach, 85-86, 138; H. Stern Museum, 31, 79-80, 114-116, 273; map, 73*
Itapagipe *Peninsula, 391*
Itaparica Island, *392-393*

J

Jet skiing, *144*
Jogging, *138*

K

Kite surfing, *142*

L

Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas, *75, 131-133*
Language, *11-12*
Lapa, *67; crime warning, 67; nightlife, 237, 239*
Lapa Aqueduct, *110*
Leblon, *74-76; beaches, 85-86, 138; map, 73; shopping, 266-267*
Leme, Rio, *70-72; beaches, 83, 85; map, 71*

M

Mamulengo Puppet Museum, Olinda, *428-429*

Manaus, *297, 303-333; accommodations, 320-331; dining, 331-332; docks, 309, 311; exploring, 309-316; getting here, 308-309; history, 306-307, 308; Indian Museum, 315-316; map, 310; market, 312-313, 333; Presidente Figueiredo, 319; Rio Negro Palace, 315-316; shopping, 332-333; Teatro Amazonas, 314-315; vaccinations, 301*
Maps: *Brasília, 350; Brazil, 26-27; Centro, Rio, 97; Copacabana and Leme, 71; Iguaçu Falls and Park, 337; Ipanema and Leblon, 73; Manaus, 310; Olinda, 422; Recife, 415; Rio area, 60-61; Salvador (Bahia), 373; São Paulo, 460-461; São Paulo downtown, 465*
Maracaná *Stadium, Rio, 145-146*
Mar Grande, Itaparica Island, *392*
Meeting of the Waters, *305, 317-318*
MIAN (Museum of Naïve [Primitive] Art, Rio), *117*
Miranda, Campo Grande, *450*
Modern Art Museum, Rio, *112-113*
Money matters, *44-45; ATMs, 56; banking, 55-56; credit/debit cards, 45, 261; currency, 44; exchange rates, 44; tipping, 45; travel checks, 44, 56*
Museums, Rio, *107, 109-110, 112-122, 254*

N

Natural History Museum, Rio, *121-122*
Nightlife: *bars and pubs (Rio), 244-248; Búzios, 296; centers (Rio), 237-239; church and museum performances (Rio), 254; cinema (Rio), 255; classical and cultural venues (Rio), 252-254; clubs catering to men (Rio), 250-251; concert halls (Rio), 251-252; crime warning, 236; dress code, 235-236; drinking age, 234; event listings, 236; gay and lesbian hangouts (Rio), 248-250; music, 232-233, 239-244; naps before, 235; night clubs (Rio), 239-244;*

Rio, 232-258; samba school rehearsals, 256-257; samba shows (Rio), 233; Teatro Municipal (Rio), 233-234, 253
Niterói, *ferries, 54*

O

Olinda, *408-438; area code, 413; Carnaval, 409-410; exploring, 420-429; getting here, 412-413; map, 422; Museum of Contemporary Art, 428; Puppet Museum, 428-429; Ribeira Market, 428; São Francisco Convent, 424; shopping, 438; see also Recife*

P

The Pantanal, *300, 438-443; bird-watching, 300, 441-442, 453; Campo Grande and South, 449-454; climate, 442; Cuiabá and North, 443-449; vaccinations, 301*
Paquetá Island, *89*
Parasailing, *144*
Pernambuco beaches, *429-432*
Petrópolis, *286-289*
Pharmacies, Rio, *57*
Planetarium and Universe Museum, Rio, *119-120*
Police, *59, 63*
Pontal House Folk-Art Museum, Rio, *119*
Postal *services, 58*
Presidente Figueiredo, *319*
Puerto Iguazú, Argentina, *341*
Puppet Museum, Olinda, *428-429*

R

Rafting, *144; Búzios, 293*
Recife, *299-300, 408-438; accommodations, 433-435; area code, 413; beaches, 429-432; Carnaval, 409-410; climate, 413; cultural center, 419; dining, 436-437; exploring, 413-420; Forte das Cinco Pontas, 416, 419-420; hippie fair, 438; map, 415; market, 418-419; orientation, 410-412; scuba diving, 432-433; shopping, 438; Sinagoga Kahal Zur Israel, 413-414; transportation, 412-413*

Religion: *Candomblé, 9-11, 257-258, 380, 394-395; Catholicism, 7; Macumba, 9-11, 257-258; Protestant, 8-9; Umbanda, 9-11, 257-258*
Restaurants, *see Dining*
Rio de Janeiro, *49-296; accommodations, 195-232; active sports, 137-145; after dark, 232-258; arrival, 49-50; beaches, 80-87; Carnaval, 149-157; Centro walking tour, 96-107; crime warning, 96; day trips, 286-296; dining, 157-195; "high season," 198; map, 60-61; mountain landmarks, 91-95; museums, 107, 109-110, 112-122, 254; neighborhoods, 65-77, 108-111; orientation, 56, 62-64; parks and gardens, 127-137; shopping, 258-285; spectator sports, 145-146; street fairs, 123-127, 265, 270; sunup to sundown, 78-149; tours, 147-149; transportation, 49-55; travel information, 55-59*
Riotur, *59*
Roberto Burle Marx Country House, Rio, *135*
Rua Paul Redfern, Rio, *nightlife, 238-239*
Rubber plantations, *306*

S

Sailing, *144*
Salvador, Bahia, *299, 367-408; accommodations, 399-403; Afro-Brazilian Museum, 376-377; beaches, 391-392; Candomblé, 380, 394-395; Capoeira, 395-396; Carlos Costa Pinto Museum, 388; Carnaval, 369, 380, 396-398; City Museum, 380; crime warnings, 371, 388, 398; dining, 403-408; exploring Lower City, 384-388; exploring Upper City, 372-383; Festival of Washing, 387;* fitas do Senhor do Bonfim, *387; forts, 389-391; getting here, 371-372; Jorge Amado home, 379-380; Largo do Pelourinho, 381; map, 373; market, 384; street (hippie) fairs, 374; tourist office, 374*
Salvador Lake, *318-319*

Santa Teresa, Rio, *69-70, 108-111*
São Conrado, *75; beach, 86; shopping, 267*
São Paulo, *300-301, 454-480; accommodations, 474-477; background, 456-458; Barão de Itapetininga, 468; Bela Vista, 470-471; climate, 462-463; crime warning, 462; dining, 477-480; downtown map, 465; ethnic neighborhoods, 469-471; exploring Centro, 463-469; financial district, 471; gardens (jardims), 472; Ibirapuera Park, 472-473; Liberdade, 470; map, 460-461; Museu Memória do Bixiga (Italian immigrant experience), 471; Museum of Japanese Immigration, 470; Snake Institute, 473; stock exchange, 466; street (hippie) fair, 469; traffic warning, 458; transportation, 459-462*
Scuba diving, *143; Búzios, 292-293; Recife, 432-433*
Shopping: *art galleries (Rio), 283-284; books and music (Rio), 255, 285; Brasília, 366; Búzios, 293; centers, 266-270; coffees and cachaças (Rio), 284; customs regulations, 263-264; gift shops (Rio), 282-283; good luck charms, 262-263; handcrafts and folklore shops (Rio), 276-278; jewelry, 272-274; Leblon, 266-267; Manaus, 312-313, 332-333; Recife, 438; resort wear (Rio), 278-280; Rio, 258-263; Salvador market, 384; shoes and leather goods (Rio), 280-282; sports gear (Rio), 282; swimwear (Rio), 274-276; tips, 261; venues (Rio), 264-266*
Sinagoga Kahal Zur Israel, Recife, *413-414*
Skate boarding, *140*
Snake Institute, São Paulo, *473*
Soccer, beach, *138*
Squash/tennis, *139*
Street fairs*: Recife, 438; Rio, 123-127, 265, 270-271; Salvador (Bahia), 374; São Paulo, 469*
Sugar Loaf Mountain *(Pão de Acúcar), 69, 78, 94-95*

Surfing, *141-142*

T

Taxis, Rio, *49-51*
Telephones, *45-47*
Tennis/squash, *139*
Theme parks, *136-137*
Tijuca National Park and Forest, *77, 78-79, 127-129; getting here, 93; hiking, 93, 128, 139; tour operators, 93*
Time *zones, 47*
Tipping, *45*
Tourist Police, *59, 63*
Transportation: *airlines, 34, 42-43, 55; Airpass, 301-302; buses, 50, 52-53; car, 53-54; Metrô (Rio), 51-52; Rio, 49-55; taxis, 49-51*
Travel information, *33-47; airlines, 34, 42-43, 55; Customs, 34-37; departure taxes, 43; electricity, 43; embassies and consulates, 36-37, 43; getting there, 33-35; health and safety, 38-41; "high season," 198; money matters, 44-45; Rio, 55-59; telephones, 45-47; time zones, 47*

U

Urca, *69; beach, 83*

V

Vaccinations, *301*
Vidigal, beach, *86*
Villa Itaparica, *393*
Visas, *35-36*
Volleyball, beach, *138*

W

Water, drinking, *38-39*
Weather, *41, 349, 462-463*
Windsurfing, *142*

Z

Zoological gardens, Rio, *135-136*